



No. CCLXVI.]

Contents

[DECEMBER 1904

PAGE

The Tiger of Muscovy 97

Chapters XXXI-XXXV. (Concluded.)

By FRED WHISHAW

A Night's Fishing in Wales. 120

By A. T. JOHNSON

The Swordsman's Victory 126

By W. H. POLLOCK

Wind and Wave 148

By L. BALDWIN

Some August Days in Japan 149

By W. E. NORRIS

A Musical Difference 170

By Mrs. COMYNS CARR

An Engine-room Affair 175

By ARTHUR H. HENDERSON

At the Sign of the Ship 183

By ANDREW LANG

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK AND BOMBAY



SPEAKER.—‘Of the practitioners of the school of the modern “novel of adventure,” Mr. Stanley Weyman is easily first.’

MR. STANLEY WEYMAN'S NEW ROMANCE.

THE ABBESS OF VLAYE.

WITH FRONTISPIECE.

PRICE

6/=

PALL MALL GAZETTE.

‘The fact is that Mr. Weyman takes a strong hold of the lover of history for its own sake. He is himself a student. He could not possibly impress the imagination as he does with his studies of the sixteenth century unless he had already fought his own way into the secrets of the age. The habits of thought, the standards of action, and all the delicate balance of personal relationships that reveal themselves in “A Gentleman of France” or “The Long Night,” are as genuine a gain to our knowledge of the past as the researches of Gardiner or Freeman, and the relish of scholarship clings to all his best works.’

DAILY MAIL.

‘Full of intrigue and adventure.’

BRITISH WEEKLY.

‘You must read Mr. Weyman’s book, for it is really excellent.’

PALL MALL GAZETTE.

‘It is a breathless chronicle of danger, love, generosity, and vengeance, a trophy of imaginative strength and refinement, and a novel scarcely surpassed by any of its predecessors from the same pen.’

DAILY CHRONICLE.

‘Mr. Weyman’s masterly romance. . . . All his characters are alive, and excite our enthusiastic interest to the very end. But if they could come out of their century into ours, how slow they would find it!’

ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS.

‘In his own field Mr. Weyman distances all competitors. . . . As for the story, exciting is too mild a word for it; and it culminates in a scene which would be tremendous on the stage, if the stage could give us two men and a woman equal to the occasion.’

SKETCH.

‘Mr. Weyman has woven a romance of the truest type. Pure love and passionate, fair war and foul, all play their part: nothing is aggressive, nothing overdrawn; incident follows incident with startling rapidity, but never without cause. The whole is fascinating, masterly description wedded to powerful characterisation.’

SCOTSMAN.

‘Not since he wrote “A Gentleman of France” has Mr. Stanley Weyman done finer work than that which astonishes and delights us in his new romance. . . . This is a great book, an ideal tale of adventure, but rising to higher reaches of the dramatic and the tragical than the adventure story usually seeks or almost ever attains.’

LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO., 39 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.
New York, and Bombay.





LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER 1904.

The Tiger of Muscovy.

BY FRED WHISHAW.

CHAPTER XXXI.

SCARCELY had the Tsar slept two hours when he reappeared in the anteroom to his bedchamber wherein a Strelitz soldier lay sleeping at the door leading to the corridor, while the night-page nodded in a chair by the stove, cursing in his waking moments this night duty, which he abhorred.

The Tsar aroused both, the one with a prod from his dubina, the other with a clout of the hand.

To the Strelitz the Tsar said: 'Go quickly, take the best horse in the stables and follow the Boyar Nagoy who rides with others towards Slatky Ozer. If thou overtake him, thou art corporal from this day; if not, thou diest. Give to him this paper.'

To the page the Tsar said: 'Go with the fellow—see him started, and bring me word.'

In a moment the two men were gone and the Tsar was upon his knees before the ikon, praying aloud and smiting his breast; he was still praying when the page returned, reporting that the Strelitz was already on his way.

Oh the joy of that grand drive of twenty leagues through the pine forests with Amy at my side! Above us a million stars, on every side ghostly trees that seemed to bow to us as we passed; a sombre throng through which the snow road ran like a white ribbon. The night was silent save when, from time to time, a wolf howled dismally in the distance, or some great bird perched in the branches near enough to the road to be disturbed

by our passing rose noisily from its sanctuary and hurtled through the darkness, crashing through the twigs and bending tree-tops that barred its passage.

Amy was silent and thoughtful, and I, uncertain whether she would resent to be disturbed in her thoughts, kept silence also. But at length Amy spoke, so suddenly, after so long a silence, that she startled me.

'Now that we are safe,' she said, 'or at any rate upon the road to safety, at least out of this awful city, I desire first to thank God for His mercies, Herbert, and secondly to say to thee this: that, though I have achieved that which I had determined upon, it is a wonder and a mercy that I have escaped scot free; and that thy counsel, though rejected by me, has been wiser than my own obstinate will.'

'It is right I should tell thee, Amy,' said I, 'that we are still in much danger, for that the Tsar will send after thee is certain; he will have me killed and thee brought back alive—or he would so have it if he could.'

I felt Amy's hand fasten upon my arm and tighten there.

'I swear his men shall not have me alive,' she said. 'Together we escape or together we die—I mean,' she added, 'that I cannot again face the Tsar alone.'

'Do you so fear the tiger's claws?' I said; 'you that have danced in the tiger's den?'

'Death is nothing,' she said; 'but to be alone in Muscovy—my God, save me from it!'

'Thou used not to be so afraid of the Tsar and of Moscow; as for being alone, that should be no new thing, for of what use was my presence there to thee since I might not see thee?'

'Nay, it was different then. Only this last day I realised that I have lighted a fire which I have not breath to extinguish. Thank God I am out of the terem! There is one will be as thankful as I,' she ended, laughing. 'Oh, it is worth some pain to have baited Maria Nagoy; well, there is no harm done her, she may have her Cæsar now! Are there many women, think you, Herbert, who have had a Cæsar at their feet and have rejected him?'

'I see not that you rejected him, but that you have created love for sport, and, having so created it, have run forthwith from your own creation.' It was wonderful to me that she should be so light-hearted, yet I was glad to see this. Doubtless the relief of being free from Court and terem was so great that as yet she had no thought for anything save the present joy. For myself,

even the joy of being with Amy could not entirely banish from me the thought of her danger and my own ; my own I believe I honestly considered only in its relation to Amy ; for what cared I for my life, only that Amy must not be left to the vengeance of the Tsar with none to help her ?

However, we were not caught yet, and it might be that somehow we should in the end escape. Muscovy is very large : might not two people hide themselves awhile within her bosom from their enemies ?

It may be that Amy desired to encourage me by her display of light-heartedness, realising that I should need all the spirit I possessed in the dangers which lay before us ; but whether this were the reason for her present mood or another—as joy to have left Moscow in safety, the delight of rapid travelling through the keen air, the simple sanguine buoyancy of youth, or what not—I cannot tell ; only certain it is that the maid became more and more imbued with lightness of spirit as the three fine horses dragged us at lightning speed league after league towards our present destination, and that soon I became infected with the same spirit of joyousness, so that we conversed pleasantly of the past and of the future, and if we touched upon the present, we found subject for mirth and laughter even in the terrors and dangers which beset us.

‘Will you not sleep awhile, Amy ?’ said I, when an hour had passed, and she seemed to grow weary of talking. ‘Our sleep at Krapatkin’s house is likely to be disturbed.’

‘Will the Tsar have learned by this of our flight ?’ she laughed. ‘Oh, Herbert, how the tiger will rage ! Shall I tell thee what will pass ? He who tells the news must be a brave man ; he will be struck down, and perchance the Tsar will himself visit the terem ; what a storm will there arise ! The Nagoyes will be accused of spiriting me away for Maria’s sake ; the brothers will be examined by the Tsar—poor Alexis ! He would have me for himself ; he will be glad of my escape from the Tsar, but will likely search and pursue on his own account.’

So Amy chattered gaily, and found subject for merriment even in matters of instant peril. But presently she fell asleep and slept for over an hour, and as she slumbered her sweet head dropped upon my shoulder and her breath brushed my cheek. The blood coursed through my veins. I longed to take her into my arms and to my heart ; held there, I should defy the whole world to pluck her away.

But Amy had given me nothing beyond a few words of gratitude; a little confidence in my power to protect her, if you will; a modicum of satisfaction that I still lived to see to her safety; as much kindness as a child might show to her nurse who had helped to pull her out of the ditch. No more than this.

‘You fool,’ I told myself; ‘is this a time for such thoughts? Would you make a bargain with the maid for reward and favour: give me this and that, and I will save your life, or because I have already saved it?’

Nay, I had not even so much claim upon her, for in this matter we were certainly at quits with one another; but for her interference, and the driving of a dangerous bargain with Krapatkin, I should even now be a prisoner within the palace, if, indeed, Cæsar had not already made of me a victim to his insane jealousy, as he had made Krapatkin.

Jealousy, forsooth! How blind is a man in love, even a Cæsar! The most foolish might surely have discovered, if he would, that no man had cause to regard me as a rival in the pursuit of Amy. Alas! would it were otherwise.

‘Be sure, Herbert,’ I now assured myself, ‘it can never be otherwise; cherish her, love her, serve her, lay down thy very life for her, if thou wilt, but thou shalt have no reward for thy service, no love—scarcely even a little “like”; be content, poor fool, with the cold friendliness of kin for kin that leads to no pulse quickening or eye brightening!’

Well, if so it must be, so be it. At any rate, I should have the joy of fighting for her to my last breath; of that no one could deprive me. Moreover, it was foolish to think regretfully of love and such things, matters which concerned a future time; whereas, probably, neither Amy nor I would ever see another moon.

Yet, if she would only give me a little love now, my God! how I would fight to save her life and my own.

‘Fool!’ I ended, ‘you will fight your best for her in any case, and that you know right well.’

Amy awoke with a start, muttering; I caught her last words: ‘Slay me if thou wilt, but his name I will never reveal.’

‘Where am I?’ she said, awaking and looking about; then, remembering, ‘Oh, Herbert, I dreamed I quarrelled with the Tsar, and he threatened me; thank God it is as it is.’

‘Whose name is that thou wouldst not reveal to him?’ I smiled. She started. ‘Did I speak in my sleep? What said I?’

'Only this—that he—the Cæsar doubtless—might slay thee, but this name should never be revealed by thee.'

'Is that all?' she asked. 'Swear that I said no more.'

'I swear that was all I heard.'

'The Tsar was jealous, as usual; he accused me of loving a man since I would give him no love, whereat—in order to irritate his Grace—I pretended that there might be or might not be one to whom my heart was given, but that his name I would never reveal!'

'Thou shouldst have felt the dubina but that thou didst wake at the right moment,' I laughed. 'As for me, I should not care to withstand a dig from Cæsar's great staff, even in sleep.'

'Even in sleep he would have spared me, I think,' she said, laughing also.

'And who was this man whose name was used as a stalking-horse to attack the Tsar's jealousy?' I asked.

'A dream-man,' she laughed, and said no more, relapsing into silence and thought until presently we dashed up to the gates which, the driver informed us over his shoulder, were the entrance to Slatky Ozer, the country seat of Krapatkin.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THIS was a great rambling wooden house, fashioned, like most of the Muscovish dachi, or country houses, in the form of a square main building in the centre, flanked by a wing on each side which came forward in a semicircle, like a man's outstretched arms, as though to embrace the approaching visitors. There were but few servants in the place, for Krapatkin's main establishment was in Moscow, and these few now went about their duties noisily lamenting the news of the boyar's death. They brought food and set it before us, sobbing and weeping, and spoke to us with the tears pouring down their cheeks.

I bade the good fellows prepare a sleeping-chamber for Amy and produce and light every candle and lantern that the house possessed.

When all this was done I spoke to them all, and said: 'Brothers, if you are wise you will now go to your homes in the village until the morning, for we two, like your master, who has been killed as you know, lie under the Tsar's displeasure; we shall be pursued

during the night for sure, and doubtless there will be fighting and bloodshed in which I do not ask you to join.'

Right glad were the honest fellows to take the hint I gave them and their departure; there is no love of fighting in the blood of the Muscovish serfs, who prefer a peaceful life among their herds and in their cornfields.

Within five minutes of my warning Amy and I were alone in this great house.

'Now,' said Amy, her eyes flashing, 'we will prepare for battle.'

'Nay,' I protested, 'retire thou and sleep, at least until our enemies arrive.' But Amy would have none of my nurse-counsel, but would first help me in my preparations; afterwards, she said, she would rest awhile.

I chose my battlefield: it should be the stairs. These led in two flights, one from each side of the hall below to the wide corridor above, and since I could not defend both single-handed, one must be blocked; therefore I collected chests and what not, and piled them so that none could pass the barricade. Then I set lanterns and candles about the hall at the lower portion of the stair upon that side which I should defend, but none above, in order that I might fight in darkness while my enemies should be plainly seen, which, I considered, would prove of no small advantage to me, for I should thus strike at substance, and they at shadow. Besides this, I should have room for arm play, being atop of the stairs, but they should be cramped; thus one man might, with care and a fair share of good fortune, withstand a score nightlong. As for arms, I had my own long rapier, and of course my dagger.

'And I have Muirhead's pistol,' said Amy, her face aglow with the light of battle; 'that shall be for the very last, in case we are worsted. If I could find a sword or an axe, I would see that none climbed this barricade to get behind thee.'

'If thou must indeed be present,' I said, 'that were a good work for thee. Couldst thou kill a man, if need were?'

Amy made a grimace. 'I hate blood,' she replied; 'but if one should threaten the life of my friend, I think I could strike with all my strength.'

'So strike, if thou must strike at all, but if God will I shall do all the striking; rather use thy eyes for me and thy voice in quickly discerning danger and in warning me in time.'

'Yes, I would rather have it so,' she said.

Then, all being prepared, Amy retired to rest, first compel-

ling me to promise that she should be roused at the first note of danger.

As for me, I lay at the top of the stairs, wrapped in my shooba, for it was very cold; my sword lay ready to hand beside me. I dozed, I think, for an hour or more.

Then I suddenly heard the sound of galloping hoofs, which came nearer. Voices shouted to one another. I sprang to my feet: the hour had come, then. 'God help us now!' I said aloud, turning to go and rouse Amy.

'Amen,' said her voice close behind me, and I saw that she was already there and waiting.

'Now for a stout heart and a watchful eye,' I said, 'both of which thou hast, Amy, my dear.'

'And now for a good sword and a long arm,' she replied, 'both of which are certainly thine; and for a man's fearless soul, which also thou hast if ever man had, Herbert, my dear.'

'Thou used not to think highly of my man's courage,' I laughed exultingly; for she had spoken with earnest emotion, and my heart swelled with joy at her praise. 'Hast thou now changed in thy opinions?'

'I have learned many things here that I knew not before,' she said softly. 'If I die to-night, Herbert, and thou remainest alive, think not of me as——'

Amy's sentence was never finished, for at this moment there came the sound of quick steps without, followed by the clatter of boot and shoulder at the outer door, which flew instantly open, for we had not barred it—what would a moment's delay have availed us?—and into the hall came thronging four men, blinking and dazed by the sudden bright light within.

I spoke their names aloud as they entered. 'Afanassy Nagoy, Belsky, Krinsky, and Alexis Nagoy. Is that all, boyars?' I said. 'You have undertaken more than the work of four men.'

'A voice from the darkness,' laughed the elder Nagoy. 'Where are you, Shadwell, and where is the lady? Let us parley.'

'Parley from there, then,' I laughed. 'There is death on the stairs.'

'Thou art in a boastful mood,' said Nagoy. 'At any rate, hear what we have to say to thee.'

'Well, say on,' I cried. 'Let us hear the oracle of Cæsar as interpreted by thee, Nagoy.'

'The oracle of Cæsar is this,' said Afanassy: 'that if we four

return before we shall have sliced thee in pieces we are to be sliced in thy stead. As for the maiden——'

'Yes, that is the main point,' I laughed, 'for of course I must be sliced, once the slicer is found.'

'We have no death-feud against either thee or her,' said Nagoy. 'Why should we? I say this lest thou shouldst think that for my sister's ends we would shed the blood of this Amy Romalyn. The Tsar has commanded us to slay both her and thee, but——'

'But,' cried Alexis Nagoy, taking up his brother's speech; 'but, Amy, if thou art there, and if not, tell her Shadwell, her life is in her own hands; new happiness I promise her, love, all that a woman can desire. This devil Tsar, whom we both fear and hate, may easily be deceived. My brother and these boyars will return and report thy death and mine, but we shall not die; thou shalt live to be a happy wife, and we need not lie hid longer than the life of the Tsar, who fails already, as one may see.' I bade Amy reply.

'Speak, Amy; what sayest thou?'

'That is a fair speech, Alexis Nagoy,' she said; 'and I thank thee for it, but I have had enough and to spare of Muscovy, and would return to my home. Moreover, what of my kinsman, Herbert Shadwell?'

'Let him escape,' said Alexis, 'where he will. The Tsar shall be persuaded that he fell beneath our swords.'

'Do not refuse this offer without due thought, Amy,' I whispered; 'at any rate, it is the offer of life.'

Amy uttered an exclamation of anger, replying in English and in her old arbitrary manner, that if I desired to gain my life by selling her into slavery, so be it. This enraged me, and I called aloud to Alexis Nagoy that my kinswoman would have none of him, neither would I take my life at his gift. 'She will return to her own people.'

'That she shall never do, if I live,' cried Nagoy back; 'I swear it.'

'Then thou art as good as dead, if it depend on thee!' I laughed.

The four boyars consulted awhile.

'At any rate we shall not kill thee, Amy,' shouted Alexis; 'but when we have cut thy fool of a kinsman in pieces, thou must choose between the Tsar and me.'

'Reply for me,' said Amy, 'but for God's sake let it be a man's answer!'

'Fight first and bargain afterwards,' I called back, 'if ye dare, boyars ; but I think you are better merchants than fighters.'

Then suddenly the battle began without further warning, and I found myself attacked by two swords, Belsky's and the elder Nagoy's, who sprang up the stairs with marvellous agility and were upon me almost before I discerned their intention.

'Take up thy position, Amy,' I shouted.

The two men cut and thrust at me for a moment or two, but the space was too narrow for both to fight freely, neither could they reach me from the position they took up.

'What, no nearer?' I cried, mocking them. 'Will you not come a step or two steps higher? See, even I cannot reach!'

Belsky was a fierce and brave man; he uttered a curse, and, springing forward and two steps upward, lunged quickly at my chest; Nagoy tried to follow, but his sword caught the balustrade. I easily parried Belsky's thrust, and gave him the counter, which just pricked his arm.

'Let me come,' cried Nagoy angrily, pushing past his companion, 'when he parries me, then strike thou, Belsky; we play the fool.'

Nagoy made two vicious thrusts, but hampered Belsky so that he could not strike when Nagoy shouted to him to do so. As he shouted the second time, Nagoy dropped his sword, which clattered down into the hall beneath, and his shout changed into a fierce curse, for the blood flowed from a deep gash in the right forearm.

As Nagoy went cursing downstairs, Krimsky came rapidly upwards to take his place; this was a small active man, quick in his movements and a good swordsman, as I soon perceived. Therefore upon Krimsky I concentrated my chief attack, feeling that in Belsky's awkward swordsmanship there was little danger. The two men fought now in concert, Krimsky attacking while Belsky awaited his opportunity to thrust. Being a much smaller man than Nagoy, Krimsky allowed his companion more space for movement.

'Now for a great effort,' thought I, and rushing suddenly upon Krimsky I buried my sword deep in his chest. But with the impetus I tripped over his falling body and fell with him, just escaping Belsky's thrust as I slipped forward. Fortunately our falling bodies knocked Belsky from his footing, so that here were we three in a moment at the foot of the stairs, lying Heaven knows how intermingled, and the two Nagoy's standing above us

ready to strike. Up sprang Belsky and up sprang I simultaneously, but Krimsky was out of the fight, dead.

My sword was still in my hand, but broken in the fall ; Belsky had lost his. As I sprang up Alexis and Afanassy both thrust at me. The sword of Alexis passed through the flesh of my left arm, but Afanassy, being now left-handed, missed me. Almost at the same moment Belsky found his sword and sprang back to the attack, but in an instant I had cleft his skull with my half sword, and he fell.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

‘HERBERT, beware! Alexis creeps behind thee,’ suddenly cried Amy from half-way down the stairs, for she hastened—God bless her brave heart!—to my assistance. With the words her pistol discharged its contents, and one moment later the sword of Alexis passed through the upper part of my chest, near the right shoulder, from back to front. I heard Amy’s shriek as I fell, and for a day, or it may be two days, that agonised cry was the last thing of which I was conscious, for in falling I banged my head so sorely against the hilt of a sword lying upon the ground that the few wits therein contained took flight and left me helpless.

When I opened my eyes I lay in a room whose heat and odour reminded me of the hut of Kiril. Where was I—what had happened? For a space I could remember nothing. I allowed my eyes to wander lazily from object to object—no ; it was not Kiril’s hut, for there the stove stood here, the table in that corner, the window was on the right of the door.

When I attempted to move my head there was pain in my shoulder, therefore I lay still and wondered, closing my eyes. Presently someone entered. This was an old peasant woman, who came, it seemed, to doctor me, for she removed the coverings over my shoulder, whence the pain had come, and applied herbs and ice, muttering something which I could not follow—spell or incantation, or what not. When she had finished I opened my eyes and allowed her to see that I was sensible.

The old woman crossed herself and bowed low to me. ‘The boyar has returned from death to life,’ she said, ‘glory be to God!’

‘Amen,’ said I feebly ; indeed, though I moved my lips I doubt whether any sound came.

'I will tell the boyarina,' the hag continued and disappeared.

A few moments later there came the sound of quick feet without, and there entered someone.

'Now, who is the boyarina?' I asked myself languidly; 'and what is the meaning of all this?'

Then Amy came to my couch-side, and laid a gentle cool hand upon my brow and spoke kind words, giving thanks to the Almighty that I was restored at last to consciousness. I lay still with closed eyes, for the sound of her voice and the touch of her hand were so exquisite to me that I feared to end them by making any movement.

'Am I in heaven, Amy,' I whispered at length, 'or still on earth?'

'Nay, you live and shall live,' said Amy, 'please God. Do you suffer much pain?'

I opened my eyes now and gazed into hers. Amy's face was white, and her eyes looked as though they had wept much. There was nothing of their usual haughty fire to be seen, but in its place a gentleness and pity which I had but rarely discerned there.

'Yes, there is pain in my shoulder, and I am very, very weary,' said I; and then, as she has since informed me, I yawned lustily and forthwith fell asleep.

When I awoke and opened my eyes Amy sat close to the couch. I now felt stronger. 'Amy, tell me why I lie here—it is a peasant's hut, is it not? And how come you to be with me? Is this Moscow?'

'God forbid!' she exclaimed. 'Do you, then, remember nothing?'

'I remember that Krapatkin is dead, and that I am in hiding from the Tsar; dost thou hide also? And why have I fallen ill in this hut, for ill and weak I am?'

Then Amy reminded me little by little of all that had happened, and which, at the moment, I had entirely forgotten, though since that day the memory of every moment of our flight and of the battle at Krapatkin's house has returned to me doubly vivid. Up to the end of the fight she carried her tale, and there ended for the day, for I yawned and grew weary—I who had never known weariness up to this hour—refusing to continue until to-morrow.

So, protesting, I saw Amy depart, and in her place returned old Marfa, the serf, the wise woman of the village, who doctored

me and attended to my wants, and until next morning I, who had tasted of heaven while Amy sat and talked to me, lay in darkness, a sick and discontented man of earth who waited impatiently for God's sun to shine once more upon his heart.

Amy came daily and sat by my side for many hours. From her I learned all that had passed since the moment of my overthrow.

'The sword of Alexis passed through your body,' she told me, 'and you fell, as I thought, dead. Then both the Nagoy's looked towards me, who had nothing but thy dagger, which I caught up, to defend myself withal. They looked upon me, and the elder laughed.'

'What should that avail thee against our two swords?' he said.

'This,' said I, 'that if either of you advance one step towards me, it shall find its way to my heart; I swear it.'

'Do nothing rashly, Amy,' cried Alexis; 'we shall not come near thee.'

The brothers consulted awhile in whispers, and while they talked two things happened: the one, I—stooping over thee—discerned, as I believed, a breathing; and the other that a horse galloped up to the very door and someone banged upon the panels demanding admittance. Alexis opened to him and there entered, panting and perspiring, a Strelitz soldier, who blinked and crossed himself as his eyes encountered the light and he saw the sight which was here revealed to him—for indeed the place resembled the shambles. The fellow handed Nagoy a paper. "From the Tsar," he gasped.

Alexis read the writing, and passed the paper to his brother.

"The Tsar has changed his mind," laughed the elder Nagoy; "thou art to be spared, Amy Romalyn, and carried back to him."

"Fear nothing, Amy," cried Alexis; "thou shalt not be carried back."

"Fool!" said his brother, reproving him, "beware! This Strelitz hath ears, like another."

Alexis turned upon the Strelitz. "What said the Tsar to thee?" he asked fiercely.

"I must overtake the Boyar Nagoy or die," said the man; "and since I failed to overtake thee, I am a dead man."

"Go without; I will speak to thee presently," said Alexis; and the Strelitz departed.

Then the brothers quarrelled over me, for Afanassy Nagoy

said that the Tsar must be obeyed, and Alexis cursed the Tsar and his brother also.

"I swear she shall not return to Moscow," he said; and I cried out, "That is true, Alexis, for all the Nagoys in Muscovy shall never carry me alive to the Tsar."

"It is easy to say that the Strelitz arrived too late," said Alexis. "The Tsar's first commands were obeyed before the fellow came with new instructions. Are we to blame that our horses outran his? Moreover, Maria will benefit, and, as thou knowest, I have sworn to possess this Anglichanka."

'I allowed this boast to pass,' said Amy smiling upon me as I lay listening and fuming in helpless rage, 'since I knew that my brave Herbert still lived, which Alexis knew not. After this the brothers conferred in lower tones, so that I heard no more, but sat upon the steps between these men and thy body, lest they should learn that there was still breath in thee.'

'Presently, their consultation being over, Alexis spoke:

"Amy," said he, "it is decided between us that we shall both return with our tale to the Tsar. This tale shall set forth that thou and thy kinsman are both dead, the later message of the Tsar sparing thee having gone astray. Thou shalt be left here in charge of the Strelitz soldier, who shall have his orders concerning thee. When I return I shall make further disposition for thy safety and happiness. Be sure that thou shalt be well and considerately treated, and shall learn to think kindly of me. Remember that I have saved thee from the Tsar."

"I will remember," said I.

"Thou shalt remain meanwhile not here, but in a village which lies a league from the great road, whither the Strelitz shall escort thee. Within a week, unless the Tsar has by that time ended me, I shall return."

'With that the brothers withdrew, and I presently heard the sound of a sledge upon the snow, which told of their departure in the carriage which had brought us two to this place.'

'Then the Strelitz came—a good fellow, of whom I quickly made an excellent friend. By his help thou wert conveyed to a hand-sledge and so drawn easily and without jolting to this hut, where old Marfa—good soul—has by God's mercy wooed thee back to life.'

'Marfa and thou, Amy, but chiefly thou,' said I. 'Even now, if I had not thy voice to hear and thy face to gaze upon, I should soon sink back into the pit.'

'Nay,' laughed Amy, 'if thou speak thus foolishly it is time I left thee to sleep off thy foolishness. Moreover, let Marfa have her due.'

'But stay, Amy, what of this Alexis—has he returned?' I asked.

'He is still absent; time enough for Alexis when I desire a husband,' she laughed.

'Oh, that I were strong and well,' said I, tears of weakness coming to my eyes; 'a pretty protector am I, Amy, lying helpless here.'

'Fret not,' she said, 'so shalt thou gain strength the sooner. As for Alexis, let him come; the very knowledge that thou art alive will so fright him that we shall soon be done with his presence.'

'But what if he trade upon my weakness? How easily were I put aside, having not the strength of a mouse; and then what of thee? Who shall protect thee from him?'

'Why—why, where is thy stout heart?' she laughed. 'Am I not mighty enough to deal with one like Nagoy? Rest in peace, Herbert, for see we have changed places; this time I shall be protector for both myself and thee!'

Two days later Alexis arrived in the village and came to seek Amy in the hut in which I lay, directed thereto by our good Strelitz, who discreetly, and by Amy's advice, said nothing of any sick man. As for ourselves, we had seen him ride past the window and were prepared for him.

'Greeting and all love to thee, my sweet bride!' cried Alexis, entering the hut quickly and with arms extended to clasp Amy.

Then, suddenly, his eye fell upon my couch. Never shall I forget the change that came over the fellow's face as he started and stopped, as though frozen to the spot in which he stood.

'Diavol!' he muttered. His eyes travelled to Amy's face, and the first look of fear and rage changed into an expression of haggard anguish. 'Was he then not slain?' I spoke, laughing:

'I have yet to thank thee, Alexis Nagoy, for a dig from behind; in our country the man who so fights is called "coward," and even harder names.'

Nagoy took no notice of my words.

'Amy, I have come to bear thee away,' he said. 'All is ready for our marriage.'

'Excepting the bride,' she laughed. 'I am otherwise occupied at present, Nagoy; I have no leisure for marriage. My kinsman needs tending; he has been sick almost to death.'

'I will wait,' said Alexis, 'a little while.'

'It is useless, Nagoy,' I cried. 'Amy will have none of thee if thou wait from now to doomsday.'

'That shall lie between thee and me, Shadwell,' said Alexis, turning upon me. 'I could fall upon thee now, if I would, and so the decision should be reached this instant; but——'

Alexis did not finish his sentence. His eyes sought Amy's face, and there, I suppose, read approval, for he continued less furiously:

'Well, take time to recover strength. I will show her that Alexis Nagoy can deal as easily with a whole man as with a sick one.'

'Next time there will be no thrusting from the back!' said I, foolishly angry to think he should have gained in any way Amy's approval; 'remember that, Nagoy.'

'There are many things that I shall remember when we meet,' he replied; 'meanwhile I shall abide in the village, lest, remembering less well than I, thou recover too soon and depart in safety.'

At this Amy laughed aloud. 'Fear not, Nagoy; I will hold him to it. He shall not play the coward,' she cried. But I, too furious to speak, could only mutter in my teeth that for these words Alexis should one day pay very dearly.

'Well, the sooner the better!' said he, and Amy laughed again as the fellow left us.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

My recovery was not of the most rapid, and even when at length I was able to get upon my feet and totter weakly from couch to window and back again, my strength so lagged behind the desire to be strong that I began to despair of ever feeling myself restored to full vigour.

During all this time Alexis Nagoy lived in the village. From time to time I saw him from the window, and Amy saw and spoke with him frequently, when, said she, he would for ever speak of love and marriage. She should be baptized and confirmed into the

Holy Orthodox Church and what not, to all of which things Amy said nothing, excepting that her charge grew daily in strength.

'Let him grow, and afterwards escape where he will,' said Alexis once; 'and come thou with me this very day—my estate is but ten leagues distant.' But Amy replied that she must first finish her task by nursing her kinsman to full strength; 'and afterwards,' said she, 'there is his consent to be obtained. Wouldst thou have a maiden marry without consent of her guardian?'

'Do not mock me, Amy!' he said angrily; 'you nurse this fellow only that he may be ripped again.'

'Alas, poor Herbert!' Amy murmured. 'Must his poor back suffer a second time?'

'I know not why I do not leave him to stew—that were mercy as much as he deserves—and carry thee away by force.'

'Here is a conundrum, indeed! Is it because thou dardest not, Nagoy?'

'Tempt me not to strike thee,' said the boyar fiercely; 'in this country women whose tongues wag are soon taught silence.'

'Then I think I shall never be a boyar's wife,' said Amy; 'for the rest, do not strike me, Nagoy, nor attempt to take me by force, for thou shouldst find, firstly, that I am not without a sting of my own, and, secondly, that my kinsman Shadwell, though weak and but half a man, is yet man enough for an Alexis Nagoy, provided that this Alexis Nagoy stand to him face to face, and thrust not from behind.'

Nagoy raised his hand as though to strike, but the blow did not fall, and the fierce boyar departed.

'What wouldst thou have done if he had struck thee?' I asked Amy, when she repeated this conversation for my entertainment.

'He should never have struck me,' said Amy. 'If the Tsar refrained, surely a Nagoy might, who is to Cæsar as a barking dog to a tiger that watches to spring.'

I know not the mind of this Alexis Nagoy, nor whether he had ever intended to await my restoration to health in order to put to the test his prowess with the sword against my own, or whether he had used this boast but as a stalking-horse, intending to obtain his real end by treacherous means while I still lay helpless. But this is certain: that he attempted neither to carry away the lady nor to rid himself by treachery of her helpless protector; but, after a month, and just as I began to practise myself in the

use of my sword-arm in preparation for our meeting, he disappeared and returned no more.

Two weeks after this Amy and I left the village, having bought from the serfs, who by this time were to a man Amy's devoted friends, horses and a telega or cart; for spring was here, and the roads were covered with a mixture of snow and mud, so that the travelling was very wearisome and not a little dangerous. We travelled by short stages, for I was not as yet at my full strength, and since we were not pursued, there was no need for particular haste, only, we agreed, we must by all means arrive in time for the first English vessel which should reach Archangel at the opening of navigation after the frost of winter.

But being constantly in Amy's company, a delight which must end or at least be shared in by others aboard ship, I regretted not one yard of the road, nor one hour of the month of days which our journey lasted. Amy was by this time the old Amy, or nearly so. She was the old Amy yet with a difference. As full of spirit, as ready to mock, to ridicule, even to turn upon a man suddenly and at a word, in scorn and anger, and yet softened, chastened, returning more easily to the gentler mood.

Both delight and pain were my portion: delight to be with Amy, to see her, and hear her voice, to be in constant touch with her. Pain that though so near to her and she mostly so kind, so friendly, I could come no nearer, as it seemed, to her heart of hearts. Of like for me she had plenty, and showed it without stint, but of love I could see no sign. Nay, if I showed by flattering word, or foolish bashful behaviour that I would hint, if I dared, of my great longing for something better than the good sisterly friendship which she gave me unsparingly, Amy's favour seemed to vanish, and she would speak shortly, angrily even, as in the days of old when even a sisterly liking for me was absent.

So that I almost despaired of that which was the great desire of my life—the gaining of Amy's heart of hearts for my own.

When within a day's journey of Archangel a surprising thing happened. We, jolting along slowly in our village cart, became suddenly aware that there overtook us two travelling carriages, each drawn by four horses abreast, cantering rapidly.

'Boyers, Amy,' said I; 'let us draw aside out of the way and allow them to pass. Huddle your face in your furs, lest there be some who have seen us at Court; I will do the same.'

Thus, when the great people passed us, our faces were so well hidden in the great fur collars of our shoobas that he would have

been clever who should have recognised us. When the two carriages had dashed past us as we sat in our humble vehicle, half in the ditch and half out :

‘Didst thou get a sight of either of the two boyars, Amy?’ said I. I had caught a glimpse of one dozing amid his furs, and the face—what I saw of it—was strangely familiar.

‘I saw both,’ laughed Amy, ‘and knew both.’

‘Was one Peesemsky, our little envoy at the Queen’s Court, with whom we came to Muscovy?’

‘Peesemsky was certainly one. But didst thou not see the other? It was our good Muirhead, and both men slept like bears in winter.’

So it proved when we reached Archangel next day, and I think there were never two men more astounded and amazed than were those two good fellows to see Amy and me still in the land of the living.

‘By the mercy of God!’ exclaimed Muirhead, as we appeared suddenly before him at the house which he and Peesemsky occupied together. ‘Do I see visions? This is not you, Shadwell, and Amy Romalyn, in the flesh? Why——’

‘In the flesh certainly, and as certainly by the mercy of God,’ said I, and Amy laughed and said that she warranted there had been much hard lying in Moscow anent our destruction. ‘Tell us that history, Muirhead, according to the version prepared specially for Cæsar’s reading.’

‘The Tsar sent men to cut you both to pieces,’ began Muirhead, ‘and another, amending the order, whereby you, Shadwell, should have been destroyed and Amy brought back alive. The last messenger, said the Nagoy, arrived too late, for, after a great fight, both of you fell, Krimsky having slain Amy and Afanassy Nagoy ending Shadwell here, who first slew Krimsky and also Belsky. Tell me now the true version.’

This we did, and, our tale finished, Muirhead resumed his story, which was remarkable and tragic enough.

For it appeared that when the Tsar heard of Amy’s death at Krimsky’s hands, he fell into so terrible a passion of rage that none dared approach him for two days, unless compelled to do so. No man was safe in his presence. After these two days he grew quieter, but was sullen and thoughtful. After a week he sent for Maria Nagoy and bade her prepare for marriage, and fourteen days later the two were married. But meanwhile the young Prince Ivan, the Cæsarevitch, wept and grew thin, and one day when the

Tsar spoke with him, angrily bidding him bear himself in a manly fashion, as a prince should, young Ivan took heart of grace and stood to his terrible father, accusing him of many things, but chiefly of the murder of Amy. No man had ever before seen the Cæsarevitch in this mood nor had deemed him capable of it. Boris Godunof, who alone was present, declared to Muirhead that if the heavens had fallen he could not have been more amazed. The positions of these two were suddenly reversed, for the son stood and upbraided, calling Heaven to witness, while the father sat and wept and groaned, beseeching pardon of God for his sins, but especially for this one of Amy's murder.

Then most abruptly the Tsar's mood changed. In the place of prayers and the sorrow of the sinner came suddenly a fit of ungovernable frenzy and rage, as a peal of deafening thunder will crash in the midst of the soft patter of quiet raindrops. Whether the Cæsarevitch—accusing his father of many things—had said some word which infuriated him Godunof cannot tell, but the wretched monarch suddenly rose to his feet and without warning committed the most horrible of all the many crimes which have made his name a terror among all civilised people. With his dubina he struck his own son dead at his feet. This had happened a month ago.

At Muirhead's recital of this tragedy Amy sobbed as though her heart would break; her hand sought mine and pressed it tightly. When Muirhead had finished she bade me follow her where we should be unobserved; her eyes were full of tears.

'Herbert,' she said, 'until Muirhead told us this last tale of the Tsar's madness, for mad he is, I had not realised in full what it is thou hast done for me. Thou hast taken me out of hell itself, my best and dearest friend.'

'If I have saved thee, thou hast also saved me,' said I; 'we are quits, Amy.'

'Nay, even though I had saved thy life, what is death in comparison with the sufferings of hell on earth? To these I should have been condemned but for thee, dear Herbert; what shall I give thee in return, say. Fear not to ask freely: there is no reward too great for such a service.'

Amy trembled and wept and clung to me. For a moment I was tempted to ask of her that which my soul desired above all earthly things—her love; but I refrained, for, thought I, love cannot be given as a reward for services rendered: if love is love it must sow itself, fertilise itself, take root and grow, and blossom

of and by itself: love that was born of gratitude would soon wither and perish!

Moreover, it would be but a base thing to accept from Amy in an hour of emotion and great agitation a gift which in calmer moments she would hesitate to bestow upon me. Therefore I controlled my longing to take her to my heart and claim hers, though the task was not an easy one.

'Nay, we are quits, Amy, as I say; thou art nothing in my debt,' said I, disengaging her hands from my shoulders.

'Nay—speak—speak!' she cried; but I shook my head and said nothing, leaving the room rather than be tempted to ask of her that which was not my own by right of conquest. Love in payment for service? God forbid!

Whereupon Amy, as I afterwards learned, and that from the best authority, sat down and set herself to laughing and crying by turns, calling me dreadful names the while, such as 'honest fool; sheep; blindworm; most dear, most obstinate, most impenetrable blockhead'—and so forth.

CHAPTER XXXV.

PEESEMSKY had letters from the Tsar for her Grace Elizabeth our Queen, sealed letters, as to the contents of which he had no knowledge and no instructions. Doubtless, said he, they treated of commercial matters, of monopolies and so forth. Muirhead travelled as interpreter.

For a month we awaited in Archangel the arrival of some vessel which should presently carry us to English shores. At last one came sailing into sight, and never, I suppose, was good ship more welcome; for every moment spent in Muscovy, now that there were eyes to see Amy and myself in the flesh, and tongues that might carry the news southward, whether by design or accident, was an added danger to us.

But the good ship *Formosa* duly landed her cargo, and presently, filled with Muscovish produce, furs, hides, tallow, and what not, set forth once more upon her return voyage, carrying for passengers Peesemsky and his suite, and Amy and myself. Right gladly did our feet take their quittance of Muscovish soil. Right fervently did we raise grateful thanks and praise to the Almighty, who had preserved us amid dangers innumerable and

horrible, which, like the pestilence, walked in darkness and in light throughout this fearful land.

Amy had been somewhat coldly disposed towards me since the hour of emotion during which I might have claimed from her her very self in payment for the services I had rendered. I thanked Heaven now that I had not yielded to the desire to take advantage of her softer mood; for certainly she now realised that she had spoken hastily—witness the coolness of her attitude towards me.

Nevertheless, there developed gradually something—I know not what—which from time to time gave me pause when I pondered upon this matter; a word said—a look given—I know not how or why I should have begun to wonder whether Amy did not after all learn to think differently of me.

One day we spoke of Muscovish men and things, I rallying her upon the number of her admirers in Muscovy. Which, I asked her, had come the nearest to gaining her heart?

‘Krapatkin,’ she replied; ‘then the Cæsarevitch, then Alexis Nagoy, and lastly the Tsar. Krapatkin was a bold lover—Nagoy lagged little behind.’

‘A little overbold both, if I may guess,’ said I; and Amy laughed and said that there were some who preferred a bold lover to one who knew not how to woo a maid.

‘If thou shouldst ever become a lover, Herbert,’ she said, ‘I wonder how thou wilt woo! By innuendo, perhaps, or more likely not at all, I wager, for indeed thy manner is most foolish with maidens, and would carry none but such as were ready to do thy wooing for thee!’

‘Thou knowest right well that I shall never love or woo, excepting whom I have always loved and always wooed, though gaining nothing by it!’ I said, sighing.

‘Why, certes, this is news!’ Amy laughed. ‘I who have seen so much of thee, have never heard thee woo. Where dwells the maiden of thy choice? Nay, look not so sheepish, man; will she not listen to thee?’

‘She gives me not her heart of hearts,’ said I, ‘though she knows that I would have hers or none. Once she told me this much: “I like thee,” quoth she, “yet love thee not; nevertheless, take me in payment for a service”—some service I had rendered her.’

‘Oh, what a heartless, wicked jade! That was a godless thing to say, Herbert. Be advised and have no more to do with one who would marry thee without love, which is indeed a sin.’

I replied nothing, for I understood not yet whether Amy mocked me or spoke with a meaning.

'This Alexis Nagoy,' she continued, 'was a pretty wooer. I dreamed of him but last night that he came to me and said: "Amy, thy long kinsman is dead; I have slain him in fair fight."'

'Oh, oh!' cried I, half laughing, half foolishly indignant, 'then he came to thee, I'll warrant, with a broken head!'

'Nay, he was in my dream untouched, which would in waking time be the most unlikely matter imaginable; so, too, with the rest of my dream, which from beginning to end was foolish and impossible, for I replied to this Nagoy: "If this is true, Nagoy, slay me also, for I have no love for any but this dear dead man, whom I loved with all my heart and soul, and have loved from the beginning, though he was so blind, or so foolish, or so humble, or so God knows what, that——"'

Well, then at last I understood—blindworm, sheep, fool that I had been so long time; and in a moment Amy lay and sobbed upon my breast—sobbed and laughed and whispered in sweet shame that she should never forgive me that in the end I had compelled her to speak for me.

'Nevertheless, Amy, my own love,' said I presently, 'I know that for many years thou didst hate me right well.'

'Ay, and loved you also,' she murmured, 'and loved most when I hated most; from childhood I loved you—before you threw me into the water.'

'If that is so, and you hated and loved me both,' I laughed, 'how should a poor sheep have known there was any love, discerning only the other?'

'Nay, it was for thy blindness I hated thee; now that thou seest clearly there shall be love only.'

To the Court of Queen Bess we returned, Amy and I, with gladder hearts than when we had left it; but first we travelled to our home in Devonshire and were there married, only returning to Court when we were summoned by her Grace in order to give account of ourselves.

'Why, thou minx, thou art dead, if I read Cæsar's letter rightly,' cried the Queen, seeing us, 'and thy long-limbed kinsman also. How came you to life again?' Amy told our story, whereat her Grace laughed and looked grave.

'Now hear,' said she, 'what Cæsar hath written—read it, my Lord Chamberlain.'

The Tsar wrote that, in disobedience to his commands, his boyars had murdered the woman Amy Romalyn, whom her Grace had sent, uninvited, to take the place of Mary Hastings. The Tsar had, he explained, since married a subject; but if Mary Hastings should be willing to reconsider her decision, his present consort, Maria Nagoy, should be quickly divorced and placed in a convent.

'So thou wouldst not remain in Muscovy, hussy, even to be the wife of Cæsar himself?' her Majesty laughed.

'Madam, I love England best,' said Amy, 'and, moreover, I have brought my own Tsar back with me.'

'What, has he prevailed at last?' Her Grace glanced, frowning slightly, in my direction. 'Well, I suppose thou must have him! Shall we send Mary Hastings to the tiger's den in thy place?' she laughed. 'What say'st thou, Mary?'

Mary Hastings made a grimace. 'Let him eat up this Muscovish Mary,' she said. 'English meat is too strong for him; see how but a taste of Amy Romalyn has turned his stomach.'

'Tell me one more thing, Amy,' said I, on a day when we spoke of all these matters. 'Why didst thou go to Muscovy to the Tsar's Court?'

'In order to show a certain blindworm how much I hated him,' said Amy laughing, 'and that I would do any rash thing to escape from England and his presence!'

'And then he came with thee—awkward, interfering fool!' said I.

'Else I had been there now,' Amy murmured, 'a poor writhing victim beneath the claws of the Muscovish tiger, instead of the happiest wife in all England!'

A Night's Fishing in Wales.

"Though sluggards deem it but an idle chase,
And marvel men should quit their easy chair
The toilsome way and long, long league to trace,
Oh! there is sweetness in the mountain air
And life that bloated ease can never hope to share."

NIGHT fishing is perhaps the most disappointing or, at any rate, the least pleasant form of angling, and, unless one lives close by the water and can turn out for an hour or two when he knows 'the rise' is on, with a comforting feeling that a cosy smoke-room is close at hand to take refuge in should the trout prove stubborn, it is seldom indulged in. I refer mainly to lake fishing, for the ordinary trout stream, however good it may be by day, is usually best left alone in the hours of darkness, when one cannot see either where to place the fly or to avoid branches, weed, or other obstacles which are ever ready to arrest the cast.

Given, however, a moonlight night, or one that is starlight, more particularly after a hot day, excellent sport can be had, even without the aid of a boat, on almost any mountain lake or tarn, if one has the patience to wait for the trout to rise, and the endurance to stand the chilly air at an hour when man—by nature, but not always by custom, a diurnal animal—should be warm and asleep.

Apart from the sport, the experience of a night's fishing on the moors has a fascination for many. To a few it affords a feeling something akin to that uncurbed, wild delight which must run in the veins of the mountain fox when he is in the still, dark night following the burning scent of the hare which he cannot see. Do not some of us still retain a remnant of that savage instinct which prompted primitive man to hunt his prey when he was hungry? Even the philosophic Thoreau in the Walden Woods sometimes felt that he could fall upon the woodchuck and devour its raw, warm flesh; yet he was anything but a hunter.

But rather than digress thus let me relate one midnight adven-

ture in search of *Salmo fario*, which, although affording no startling incidents, has impressed itself upon my memory while other more successful and more recent excursions are dimming in the past.

It was at least eight miles to the mountain lake that I had decided to fish, and a great part of the way was hard climbing. Although I knew the path tolerably well by day, to attempt it at night was altogether another matter. So I, therefore, after much difficulty, persuaded a native of the village to accompany me as guide. All Welshmen of a certain class are superstitious, and my 'gillie' was no exception. He had 'heard tell' of the raven that haunted the black shades of the precipices that bound the lake we were destined for, and he was afraid lest he should see the dread bird of ill-omen. Other fearsome things, which only the Welsh language can describe, he nursed in his imagination as holding court on the lonely shores of the lake. He was short, humpbacked, and ferret-faced, yet as tough a specimen as one would wish to see. From much mole-catching and ferreting in muddy weather his clothes had become begrimed with red-brown soil, and the tweed jacket, which had evidently seen its best days on someone else's back, hung in loose folds from the narrow shoulders of its wearer.

As we climbed the winding path up the hillside the summer night was already beginning to get chilly. Here and there, where a rock or stone wall had absorbed the heat of the sun, one experienced a puff of warm air in passing, but the cold, grey dew was falling on moor and meadow before the last traces of day had vanished from the west.

The reed-warbler, which makes up in Wales for the absence of the nightingale, was trilling in the willows, and a softly churring goat-sucker would occasionally glide past as silently as the moth which it was chasing. The lights of distant farmhouses shone in the hillsides like stars, and the smell of burning peat hung in the night air. That air was the air of summer, yet there was that indescribable something in it that reminded one of the first touch of autumn. Softly in the dark, quiet night the dew laid a refreshing hand upon the leaves and flowers as if to preserve them yet a little while longer; but nevertheless there was the autumn scent which told one only too plainly that the drooping harebells and half-blown foxgloves would in the morning be covered by a glistening network of 'dew-strung gossamer.'

When the summit of the first hill had been reached the way lay across grassy sheepwalks interspersed with bog and rocky ground. Here my ferret-faced companion took the lead. He shuffled along

with a quick, uneasy step, following the path, which was scarcely discernible in the darkness, as if by scent. Instinctively he avoided bumping against projecting stones, and by the sound of his footsteps he could say when he was nearing dangerous ground. He threaded his way across the wide moor in silence. The only occasion upon which he looked aside and appeared to forget the dread black lake, with its awful precipitous sides and their uncanny inhabitants, was when the shadowy forms of mountain ponies appeared and vanished again in the darkness, or when the patter of scuttling sheep could be heard on the soft turf. Now and then a snipe would rise from among the rushes, and passing curlew would whistle mournfully in the distance. The slight breeze carried on fitful puffs the sound of the little stream far below as it rippled round its stony bends, and that sleepless bird the plover was just as persistently uttering its 'Pee-weet, weet-a-weet-a' as it does by day.

Before the lake is reached a broad rising plain of heather has to be crossed, and there the walking is exceedingly difficult. The rising moon cast a pale light above the horizon which served to make visible the treacherous bogs with their covering of yellow-green moss and butterworts, but the moor was intersected with other pitfalls. The path had entirely melted away into the heather and the latter was honeycombed with deep holes half-filled with slimy water, while here and there the gurgle of a tiny brook could be heard deep down in the peat. In some places these brooklets are entirely concealed by turf, but the narrow channel through which the water flows is often three or four feet deep, and an unwary step might easily be followed by a broken leg.

The lake breaks suddenly into view when the last ridge is topped, and its dark waters involuntarily repel one at first sight. It is only accessible from one side, all others being walled in by rugged crags that rise three hundred feet above the inky water. There the snow often lies in the deep hollows until June, and scarcely a thing but the raven and the parsley fern can find in those bare rocks a home.

Usually so dark and forbidding even by day, the lake on that particular night was bespangled with glittering stars that were mirrored on its placid surface. The desolation and loneliness that ever seem to haunt that quiet stretch of water and those majestic old rocks oppress the mind, and one involuntarily listens and longs for a sound. Only the low swish of a tiny waterfall on the other side falls upon the ear, and it rises and sinks like the

sighing of some troubled spirit as the night air drifts this way or that.

Not a fish was moving when we arrived, not a ripple broke the glassy surface, and the mirrored stars were as still as they were in the blue-black sky. After a little while, however, there was a flop in the distance, then another, and in a few seconds some little ripples came rolling towards the shore. The stars danced over them, and the water lapped against the stones or sucked into the creeks of crumbly peat. The trout had begun to rise, and in a little while the whole surface of the lake was dimpled with hundreds of leaping fish. They seemed to be sporting like a school of porpoises, and when they did flick a tail at my carefully prepared cast the result was either a foul-hooked fish—or not so much as that.

If a trout will not respond when I make him a fair offer in the way of flies, I very seldom go to the trouble of tempting him with any other pattern, for I know that a feeding fish will take almost anything of a given type. So I whipped away with the two-handed rod, letting out more and more line, and manipulating the flies in every conceivable way until weariness and tantalisation combined prompted me to reel up and wonder what that sly Welshman was doing.

I came upon him casting vigorously with his ash-plant rod, and, sure enough, there on the bank lay a little heap of trout, their golden sides glistening in the moonlight. There were comparatively few trout rising here, yet he was enjoying good sport.

Having found the fly useless he had taken to worm, but instead of using it in the usual way he was skimming it along the surface of the water, and in the dim light looked just as if he might be spinning a minnow. He made few casts without getting a rise, and as his tackle was strong, the fish, when once firmly hooked, were unceremoniously hauled to land. His long experience of lake fishing had taught him that it was useless to angle where the fish were rising in the vigorous, playful mood that I have mentioned, and subsequent trials have proved the truth of the statement.

Whether the trout are merely playing or feeding on midges I could never ascertain, and it does not much matter from a fisherman's point of view. In the former case the fish are scarcely worth trying for, and, again, if they are determined to make their suppers off midges they are equally hard to catch, for the very good reason that an artificial midge has never yet been made with any resemblance to the real thing.

However, I soon followed the example of my earthy-coloured

friend, and had an hour's good sport before the fish ceased feeding. It was significant that the other fish who were holding high carnival on the surface of the deeper water discontinued their extraordinary capers almost at the same time, and the memory of that final scene is as clear to-day as if it happened but last night, although so many summers ago.

Day was just appearing in a blue-grey light, and it served to illuminate a little white cloud that hung like a fleece against the dark shade of the highest precipice. The cloud, almost imperceptibly sinking, increased in size as it neared the black water, and its lower parts ran out into a long line of white mist. Like an horizon of light lying over a dark sea it gave one the impression of an enormity of distance, an immensity of space, too great for the mind to conceive. One felt that he was looking through that vast mountain range towering above, and across an illimitable sea beyond. Then a cold fleecy vapour swept past, mountain and lake were blotted out, and the trout were immediately silent.

I instinctively felt a kind of sympathy for my superstitious companion, who was hurriedly, and with nervous hands, disjoining his rod, while he ever and anon turned a worried, scared face towards the home of the raven. He knew full well that with the first glint of dawn the dread bird would glide out of its rocky haunt like a messenger of evil with fell intent.

We were far away from home, high up in cold cloudland; it was wet and desolate; a chilly, cell-like darkness pervaded that mighty hollow in the hills, around which the vapour swirled in unending ghostlike columns. Then the deathly silence was at last made hideous by the raven's cry; a quick succession of half-stifled, gulping croaks pierced the veil of vapour and were echoed and re-echoed from rock to rock. In derisive chuckles and fiendish grunts the evil spirit of the mountains announced the day, and verily it was a shuddering, hellish sound befitting such an eerie place.

On turning round I discovered that my 'gillie' had already fled, and I did not overtake him until well on the way home. There he was sitting against a wall nursing his bony knees, shivering with the cold and doing his best to absorb some of the warmth of the pale sunlight. An empty beer-bottle, which had contained his whisky, lay by his side, and through his chattering teeth he explained how he had lost some of his fish in his headlong race across the moor to escape the curse of the raven. Then, with an imploring look at me, he endeavoured to suck another drop out of the already empty

bottle, and threw it away with a sigh. But he brightened and exclaimed, 'Arglwydd Mawr!' ('Great Lord!') as he swallowed some of the contents of my flask, and in rather less than an hour we were heartily tackling a breakfast in the village inn. The fresh trout, firm and pinky, eggs and bacon, and the appetite that only a cold night's angling on the hills can supply, are not soon forgotten in after-years.

I am old-fashioned enough still to love the real old 'village pub.' for its own sake, notwithstanding the musty atmosphere of the 'parlour,' the awful whisky, and the casual management; and while there is yet one remaining let me enjoy its warm welcome and peaceful seclusion rather than endure the all too attentive waiters, emblazoned menus, and 'modern comforts' of the first-class angling hotel.

A. T. JOHNSON.

The Swordsman's Victory.

I.

WHEN Everard Knighton and his young wife (formerly Viola Torrens) went, not so very long after their marriage, to stay like birds of passage in the neighbouring city of Paris, one of their first callers was Edmund Derwent, who had long been the representative in Paris of a great English paper. He had, as it happened, been on terms of friendship in his youth with the families of his host and hostess, and in the visits he paid to London after settling in Paris had watched the growing up both of Viola and of Everard. When he wrote to announce his coming visit of congratulation—he had not seen them since the event—he said that he would take an old friend's privilege in bringing with him a certain Abbé Boisrose, who was his guest for a short time, and who, he hoped, would interest the young people. When the two visitors arrived, the first impression, Viola thought, that they might produce on a person who knew neither of them would be that they were a strange study in contrast. Edmund Derwent was small, somewhat rotund, thoroughly well dressed and groomed, with dark eyes, bright in themselves, and with their sparkle enhanced by the excellently kept thick white head of hair above them, emphasised again by a gay dark moustache. He was as full of agreeableness as an unforeseen and pleasing gift, and of vivacity as a spinthariscopes. The Abbé Boisrose, on the other hand, was tall, gaunt, grey of hair and complexion, aquiline of feature, with a certain saturnine look which may have been partly due to the peculiarity that his left eyebrow was distinctly higher on his forehead than its companion on the right hand. The conversation, after the first business of introduction was over, turned on rain and fine weather—so much the three English people owed to their country—and naturally upon Paris and the changes which time had worked and was working in it. 'You young people,' said Derwent, who was really not so very much older than Everard, but had begun to knock about the world

earlier, 'of course, do not feel this as I do. It is often enough said that daily companionship makes one insensible to change in one's surroundings, human or other. Don't you believe it! There are certain places which I pass nearly every day, and never without a pang, remembering what they were like under other consulships.'

'There at least,' said Knighton, 'I can sympathise to a great extent from having been pretty constantly here at one time of my youth. Every flying visit that I make now is something of a pin-prick. Take the matter of restaurants for one thing only. I love not to see a brasserie glaring and staring on the very spot where in old days you used to give me delightfully artistic dinners.'

'No,' replied Derwent sharply, with an air he sometimes affected of finding contradiction where none was meant; 'but you don't really know anything about it. You haven't seen the old places disappearing; you haven't found new ones of some merit with great difficulty, and then on a chance word to some friend you are ass enough to trust (of course I never mention such places in the paper), seen them rushed and ruined. No! What can you know about it?'

'Well,' Viola interposed with a soothing smile, 'whatever the changes may be, Paris is always Paris. *Parigi*—'

'There!' Derwent broke in with a show of much irritation, 'don't go on! If you knew what I suffer from people who ought to know better—of course, my dear, you *do* know better—and yet will quote *Parigi o cara* as if it were a sentence to itself and meant *O beloved Paris*! Bless my heart! Who would be a newspaper correspondent?' At the irrelevance of which question he himself was constrained to join the others in laughing. During this and other light talk the Abbé uttered scarce a word save here and there a brief interjection generally of a doubting kind. Presently, however, when the conversation hovered for a moment on politics, Derwent spoke of some recent move as a Jarnac stroke. Then Boisrose almost snapped out, while a slight frown intensified the peculiarity of his face: 'The Jarnac stroke was neither more nor less than the *rovescio* or *falso manco*, a thing as absolutely fair in those days as a feint on the high line and an attack in *seconde* would be now.'

Viola and Everard looked at each other, and Derwent, laughing, broke in with 'To be sure, Abbé, I was rash, indeed, to use such a simile in your presence, to say nothing of my old young friend Knighton.'

'And I,' said the Abbé with rather stiff courtesy, but with an

approach to a smile, 'was far more rash to adventure such a statement before Mr. Knighton, whose learning and authority I well know.'

Knighton muttered a few words, and made a gesture of deprecation, and said: 'Then the Abbé, with whom I have the honour to agree completely as to the Jarnac stroke, takes an interest in the *ars dimicatoria*?'

'Oh!' said the Abbé, whose demeanour was certainly relieved of some stiffness by the subject or by his interlocutor's pleasant manner, or by both, 'an interest—yes, certainly—but almost or entirely in theory alone. If for every month that I have not touched foil or sword I could count a well-won assault, why then I might nearly think myself worth a beating by Mr. Knighton. The history of the sword, however, will never cease to interest me.' And therewith he proceeded to mention certain works of authority on the subject which were as household words to Everard and to Viola, who took up the conversation to say, with a bow to the Abbé, 'Why, Everard, the Abbé is the very person to whom, if he would be so kind, we might appeal as to your latest acquisition.'

'Hey! what?' said Derwent, 'a new curio, Everard? The sword of Roland or the hauberk of Charlemagne?'

'My dear Edmund,' said Knighton, 'Charlemagne, as I see Viola is dying to tell you, only she's too polite, did not wear a hauberk so far as one knows. But as to that, my latest find is a sword, and rather a queer one.'

'Indeed!' said the Abbé in a tone which invited further information.

'Yes,' said Viola, who seemed interested in all Boisrose's generally curt utterances, 'it really is a little out of the way; in fact, I think one might endorse the epithet of the German dealer from whom Everard bought it—*baroque*.'

'A German,' Derwent said in a dry tone, but with a twinkling eye. 'Was he also a Jew?'

'That I cannot tell,' Everard broke in. 'I disremember his name, though I know his shop by heart, and his appearance tells nothing. I have had truck with him several times in my bachelor days, and take him for as honest a dealer as you may light on in these days, when ignorant love of collecting encourages shams only too grossly. Old Becker—his name comes back to me in a flash—is a bit of a sportsman too. He told me quite truly, as I believe, that he could put neither date nor value to the thing, and asked me to make an offer. I "picked out a middlin' shiny one," as I

thought, and proposed to toss him if I should give him seven thalers more or less than the sum named. He acceded at once. He won, but that's neither here nor there.'

'Ah!' said Derwent. 'Then, my dear Viola, you have not yet cured our Everard of his love for fancy wagers!'

The chance remark must have struck some memory, for there was a momentary and unaccustomed frown, noted by the Abbé but not by Derwent, before she replied lightly: 'Not quite yet. But even Haussmann did not build his Paris in a day. But you have forgotten the tag to the Becker transaction, Everard!'

'That, my dear,' Everard made answer, 'is *your* story.'

'Tell it! tell it! Let us not burst in ignorance, but tell,' cried Derwent, while the Abbé leant forward with an inquiring look under his strangely mated eyebrows.

'It's very easily told,' said Viola, 'and maybe there's nothing, maybe there's something in it. That is just as it strikes you. The morning after Everard's bargain I went into Mr. Becker's rambling, darkling, fascinating shop to see if I could come to terms for a curious turquoise ring. My fancy may have lent it some kinship with the ring Jessica stole.'

'And fact,' broke in Derwent, 'may have lent Becker some kinship with Shylock!'

'You ought not to interrupt,' said Viola; 'but there is at least a touch of Oriental mysticism in the good Becker. For when we had settled the question of the ring he spoke of the sword which the so-learned-and-accomplished Herr had carried off the day before, and while he spoke there was a curious far-away look in his eyes which seemed to prepare me for his saying, "You have an understanding mind. I see it in your face. Therefore I will tell you that of which I feel sure. There is a fate attached to that sword. Is it good, is it evil? I cannot tell, but, mark me, it will have some masterful influence on its owner's fortunes."'

'That,' said the Abbé in a tone of conviction, 'is really and truly interesting.'

Viola flashed a swift glance at him, and 'I somehow felt that you would think it so,' she said.

'There's one thing,' said Derwent, 'in your Becker's favour—that he made that profound remark after he had disposed of the sword. Though, to be sure, I'm not certain it don't cut both ways. But anyway it makes one mighty curious to know what the sword is like.'

'Indeed, yes,' said the Abbé, still with his air of interest.

'Well,' said our Everard, 'have you seen a Crusader's sword?'

'I never knew you were a parcel Scot,' Derwent observed; but the Abbé gravely made answer: 'A Crusader's sword? Surely, yes.'

'Then,' continued Knighton, 'it is more like that than anything else, only much more short and slender. There are some peculiarities about it. But you should see it. I have it with me securely packed in a special case. If you will honour us by repeating your visit to-morrow it shall be ready for your inspection. We stay but a short time.' Viola gracefully confirmed the invitation; the Abbé bowed; and then Knighton, turning to Derwent, said: 'But all this time, Edmund, you have not told us if there are any new things or people to attract us in our brief sojourn.'

'Things?' said Derwent. 'There are always new things in Paris, and you know where to look for them almost as well as I do. There's a sale at the Hôtel Drouot to-morrow. As to people, there is one person I think might interest you. A general favourite, but'—he looked out of the tail of his eye at the Abbé—'people sometimes differ about him.'

'Then,' said Viola, 'he should be all the more worth meeting. Who and what is he, may I ask?'

'By name and style the Marquis d'Andras. People here, as you know, don't inquire too curiously about rich and attractive strangers. And that is not peculiar to Paris. Supposed to be a Pole, as to which, so far as I know, he has neither affirmed nor denied.'

'But what is he like?' asked Viola, with a touch of feminine impatience.

'That,' Derwent replied, 'I should prefer your finding out for yourself. A long experience warns me against attempting needless personal descriptions. We are sure to meet him somewhere, and, if not, I'll arrange a meeting. But that reminds me. I have brought places for the Français to-night, hoping that Mrs. Knighton may deign to accept them.'

'Mrs. Knighton will be delighted,' said Viola.

'And perhaps you will permit me to join you if I can manage it. Nothing more likely than that D'Andras should be there as it's a special night, and if we don't come to speech of him you can at least judge of his appearance. Are you coming my way, Abbé?'

Viola, with a hurried word under her breath in English to Everard, now asked the Abbé if he would not come to breakfast

on the morrow, adding: 'There is no need for formally asking Mr. Derwent.'

The Abbé, with something like the reflection of a smile, and Derwent saying, 'Then I may possibly see you both to-night and to-morrow, but it all depends. Who would be a journalist?' went off together.

The conversation, like all those to be here recorded between interlocutors of mixed nationality, had been carried on in French. Knighton and his wife, left alone, fell naturally to English, in which tongue he said to her, 'It's as good as a play to see Derwent again. What a boy it is! In spite of his whitening hair he will never grow up.'

'No!' said Viola, 'thank Heaven he never will. He is a standing rebuke to precocious sages.'

'A strange kind of wildfowl that Abbé of his,' Everard continued.

'If you judge by his profile,' said Viola, 'the soul of his grand-dam might have inhabited a bird.'

'But you can't, even you, my darling, can't judge by a profile.'

'Nor,' Viola replied, 'by a full face or a three-quarters.'

'Well,' Knighton resumed, 'I never saw a bird with such queer eyes. I should not be surprised if he is quite as sinister as he sometimes looks.'

'And I,' said Viola, 'should be very much surprised.'

'Why,' said the other, 'you have mentioned some things by which you can't judge. Pray by what do you judge?'

'Well,' Viola answered, 'as you will be talking of birds, perhaps I judge him as I do you.'

'How, then?'

'By a goose-look, to be sure.'

II.

An hour or two later a note from Derwent to Viola announced that he was, as it happened, free for the whole evening, and hoped, therefore, that she and Everard would dine with him at his latest discovery in the way of good and yet unspoilt restaurants. At this place, therefore, they met him, but as I not only know but approve his sentiments on this matter, I shall give no clue to its name or situation. The dinner was excellent; there was neither too much nor too little of it, and it lasted just long enough. 'Such a repast,' Derwent observed, 'is a first rate appetiser for a good

play; though,' he added, 'I don't suppose you people are particularly open to such considerations. Wait till you come to no-matter-how-many year. I remember as if it were yesterday the time when I thought as little of dinner compared with the play as did Thackeray's schoolboy in another passage.'

'You, like me, began your playgoing pretty early,' said Knighton.

'Yes, and that is why, as I was going to say just now, I was able to appreciate the wonderful Déjazet when, as a boy of eighteen or less, I saw her play in *Les Trois Gamins* at Rouen. Such an assumption of absolute youth by age puzzles belief. The people I have heard compared with her since! Ah! If I could only say all I think in my correspondence columns! Bless my heart! Who would be a journalist?'

'I think,' said Viola, 'I know one person who would not willingly change the calling.'

'And,' added Everard, 'if you were not a great journalist we might not now be going to excellent places at the Français. Let us, at any rate, thank your cruel destiny!'

'Ah, well!' said Derwent, 'journal or no journal, it is about time we went.'

As it happened, they were, like ideal playgoers, in their places ready to see and hear with all their attention nearly a quarter of an hour before the three knocks sounded. Naturally they employed the time in looking round the house and chatting. Derwent and Knighton were presently engaged in exchanging reminiscences, and did not notice that for a minute or more Viola's eyes had been fixed on a particular object. Presently she turned her head and, touching Derwent on the arm, said: 'There, in the stalls, is the man you were speaking of this morning.'

'So it is,' said Derwent—'D'Andras. I wonder I did not notice him.'

'He was not here,' said Viola, 'when we came in.'

'But, my dear Viola,' Everard began, and was interrupted by Derwent crying: '*But*, indeed! How on earth did you come to identify him?'

'Who knows?' Viola answered somewhat dreamily. 'Perhaps a touch of second sight from Scots forbears. Anyhow, I did know at once it was Monsieur d'Andras.' She gave a little shiver and drew her light wrap closer about her. Everard looked perturbed; but Derwent, looking over his shoulder, said: 'Ah! that open door. It will be shut directly.'

Everard naturally looked hard at the man whom Viola had spotted, although Derwent had not described him, and saw a man, young, tallish, slender, with hair and slight moustache of that Venetian red less commonly found in men than in women, and with a countenance which was not regularly handsome, but of which the mobility, seeming to reflect every passing impression, might well be an attraction. 'A strange personality,' he said musingly. 'And an engaging one,' added Derwent, and just then the signal was given for the rise of the curtain.

The play of the evening, a comparatively short one, was well fitted to display many of the finest qualities of the great tragedian St. Michel, worthy successor to great forerunners, notably Talma, in grandeur and depth of emotion, and, now that he had shaken off a tendency to extravagance, in truth to Nature. While the curtain was up our three friends were absorbed in what was passing on the stage. During one of the *entr'actes* Derwent sent his card round to St. Michel, was invited to follow it in person, and, soon coming back to the others, said to Viola: 'I saw him for a moment. He sent all kinds of messages, and hopes that if you can endure not to see the afterpiece we will all pay him a visit in his *loge* while it is going on.'

'He has not forgotten us, then?' said Viola.

'He never forgets a friend, and he never writes a letter. Who would not be an actor?' answered Derwent, varying his usual catchword.

St. Michel and Knighton had known each other for some time, and the actor had made the acquaintance of Viola when she and her mother had joined Everard on one of his bachelor visits to Paris. And St. Michel was one of those people with whom one takes up the threads exactly where they were dropped, no matter how long an interval may have elapsed meanwhile. Therefore it was with complete pleasure that after the curtain fell on the principal play the young people made their way with Derwent to St. Michel's *loge*, which was, in fact, a miniature drawing-room furnished with fine artistic taste. Out of it opened a tiny dressing-room. From this latter, when for a minute or two the visitors had been admiring the pictures and statuettes, gifts from the creators, on the walls of the outer room, St. Michel emerged, having doffed his tragic robes for evening dress. His greetings were cordial and sincere—indeed, a simple sincerity was so much the dominant of the man that now and again foolish folk took huff with him; and they had scarce died down when there was a

knock at the door, and in answer to St. Michel's deep vibrating '*Entrez !*' there came in Monsieur d'Andras. Viola said afterwards, and her hearers knew it was the truth, that she had felt his coming in the knock. If the appearance of the Marquis d'Andras had pointed to a personal charm, the indication was more than confirmed by his voice, which, like that mysterious thing 'charm' itself, had an indefinable attraction. Its tones seemed in complement rather than in contrast to the delicately modulated resonance of the tragedian's intonations. It was difficult to assign a quality to the new-comer's voice, which, mobile as his face, seemed to take on the texture now of tenor, now of baritone, and again at rare moments of a perfect boy's alto. But above all it was engaging.

The conversation, beginning naturally with things suggested by the play just finished, ranged on to this, that, and everything, and D'Andras showed himself apt in catching the ball and keeping it in play, with fully sufficient but not browbeating skill. Presently there came an occasion for St. Michel to deliver a few vehement sentences—there was an electrical current in his simplest utterances—charged full with a beautifully child-like optimism which was part and parcel of the man. 'But, my dear friend,' said Everard, when the actor paused, 'in all you have said you have left thoroughly bad people out of all account.'

'Because,' rejoined St. Michel with a laugh as bright as his own southern suns, 'just because they are of no account.'

'Ah !' struck in D'Andras with a sudden fire in his voice and eye, 'it is easy for you to say that and to be convinced of it, for your words are always tokens of conviction. How with your nature should you think otherwise when your whole career has been one upward course ? You might feel differently had you known what it is to fall.' His voice had for a passing instant a note of profound melancholy, and 'Then he certainly is a Pole,' said Knighton to himself. The next moment D'Andras was perfectly gay, and soon after the little party broke up, St. Michel to attend a reception, the others to stroll, as it was a beautiful night, along the Rue de Rivoli to their various destinations. As they left the theatre D'Andras, turning to Viola, said, 'Is not St. Michel delightful ?'

'I think,' she answered, 'he must seem the more so the more you know him.'

'Yes, indeed,' said Everard—'the simplicity of a child with the faculties of a giant.'

'Ah! yes,' said D'Andras; 'sometimes he reminds me of Berlioz's "*Rakotczky March*."'

'Then,' thought Everard, 'perhaps after all he is a Hungarian.'

'I know exactly what you mean,' observed Derwent; 'and at times he reminds me of—of a lyric actor that none of you can have seen. Who would——'

'Come! come!' broke in Viola, interrupting the imminent words. 'We are none of us old here, and you least of all. Everard, we turn down here.'

As they said good-night D'Andras expressed a hope that he might be permitted to pay his respects to Mr. and Mrs. Knighton. Viola said a few gracious words, and Everard added: 'We shall certainly be at home in the early afternoon, Marquis.'

'Ah! thank you,' answered D'Andras; 'but please do not trouble yourself to use my silly title. It may have its uses, but not for you, and to say truth it only reminds me——' He checked himself and said good-night again, while Everard said to himself, 'Then he is a Pole, after all.'

When the Knightons had reached their rooms and Everard was smoking a final cigarette, he said to Viola: 'And what do you think, my darling, of Mr. Derwent's Marquis, or, as he wishes it, Monsieur, d'Andras?'

'I think,' said Viola, 'that he is not Mr. Derwent's nor anybody else's but his own Monsieur d'Andras.'

'Yes, no doubt,' said Everard musingly. 'Very individual.'

'And very melancholy,' added Viola.

'Ah! you noticed, of course, those two occasions of a momentary sadness?'

'Two occasions, you dear silly boy! All occasions. He was most melancholy when he seemed most gay.'

'I wonder,' said Everard. 'Anyhow there certainly is a fascination about him. Something—what shall I say?—caressing in his tones and gestures.'

'Ah!' rejoined Viola, 'so there is in the terrible music the *Erlkönig* sings to the child.'

'Terrible? Well, I see what you mean,' said Everard, and closed the chapter.

The next morning came duly to breakfast Derwent and the Abbé Boisrose, to whom the English resident, who had called for him on his way, had evidently been discoursing on the events of the past night. For Derwent had scarcely finished some compliments on a little wine of Bordeaux (as to which he observed, being

reminded that it was of his own recommendation, 'Well, living in Paris has some advantages') when he said, 'But to return to D'Andras. There are many who would be highly flattered at his asking leave to call, as he did, on you. It is by no means everyone whose company he seeks. Is it not so, Abbé?'

Did the Abbé make a hint of a wry face, or was it the natural trick of his unmated eyebrows? Anyhow, he replied in rather measured tones: 'To do Monsieur d'Andras justice, he always picks out the best people for such a mark of preference.' And then with a fine natural modesty he apologised for a blunt but unstudied compliment.

'All the same,' said Derwent, 'there's a touch of self-praise in what you say, Abbé, for I'm sure when you first met D'Andras laid himself out to be agreeable to you.'

'Ah!' said Boisrose, 'somehow we did not hit it off. One sometimes has inexplicable prejudices.' As he spoke his eye caught Viola's, and he stopped suddenly while she said: 'The sword, Everard—perhaps the Abbé would look at it while we are waiting for coffee.'

'To be sure,' said Knighton, and lifted the sword, now unpacked and cased in a modern scabbard, from a sofa where it had been lying ready for inspection. It was found to answer closely enough to Everard's brief description in looking more like an abridged Crusader's sword than anything else. The flat blade was double-edged, grooved on both sides, and nearly as slender as the ordinary triangular Königsmark or Colichemarde, which it resembled in being broad at the hilt and tapering to the point, which was sharp. From the pommel of the straight hilt to the end of the blade it was made of a curious dull-looking metal. The quillons were disproportionately broad and very slightly counter-curved. All these variations on the simplest form of *gladius* were duly noted, as he looked, by Boisrose, for whom the strange weapon seemed to have at once a fascination as strange as itself. Viola and Everard watched him in silence, which was broken by Derwent saying, 'And how old do you take this queer bodkin to be, Abbé?'

'How old?' repeated the Abbé, looking up, and then down at the blade again. 'Mr. Knighton will correct me if I am mistaken, but it appears to me that, apart from the fact that it certainly is not a very modern piece of fancy-work, it might be literally of any age. It is curious, very curious.'

'I,' said Everard, 'was on the point of appealing to the Abbé for confirmation of the very same view. But there is one pecu-

liarity which I think has escaped you. Would you look at the quillons with this?' He handed a pocket magnifying-glass to the Abbé as he spoke. Boisrose took it, looked through it, and gave a little suppressed cry. 'Why,' he said, 'there is an inscription. How minute! And how beautifully cut! And there seem to be five, six—no, seven words.'

'That,' said Everard, 'is just what I made out. That and no more. But I think you will find something more on the broad base of the blade.'

'Yes! yes!' cried the Abbé as he looked, 'something much longer and on both sides. Oh! if I knew what it is! Of course you have noted that it is Oriental, but it is not ordinary Persian or Arabic. That much only can I tell you.'

'Do you know of anyone in Paris who could tell us more?' cried Viola, who seemed to have caught something of the Abbé's excitement.

'No one that I know sufficiently to ask without tiresome formalities. There was such a one here yesterday, but he has just gone back to London—Hugh Desvignes.'

'Desvignes,' said Everard, 'an old friend; how unlucky to have missed him! But doubtless in London—only I should like you to know, Abbé!'

'I may be in London before long,' said the Abbé. At that moment there was a ring at the bell, and just as Knighton had put the sword carefully back in the adjoining room Monsieur d'Andras was announced. His arrival seemed to stimulate conversation and good-humour in all present except the Abbé, who, to be sure, had already talked a good deal more than was his wont. The visit, however, was a gay little episode, and as D'Andras rose to go he mentioned that he was due at Paradol's *salle d'armes*.

'Why,' said Everard, 'is not this his day off? But for that I had thought of going myself.'

'But do come,' said D'Andras. 'You will be all the more welcome as it is really a kind of *five o'clocker* with a few friends.'

'Yes,' said Everard, 'I know Paradol well enough to go uninvited, and even, if he will allow me, to carry the Abbé with me.'

The Abbé hesitated, and then decided that, as it was a private and informal occasion, he could not resist the invitation. So three of our friends went off together. Derwent, who had business on hand, remained for a few minutes' more talk with Viola, during which she tried to find out more about Monsieur d'Andras, without success, since Derwent had told all he knew.

Paradol, most accomplished and most courteous of Parisian masters, received his guests, bidden and unbidden, with delighted geniality. As D'Andras had indicated, there were but five or six other amateurs present, and the talk naturally turned mainly on the art of the white arm. D'Andras, finding himself after some general conversation watching a good assault from a corner, in company with Knighton and Boisrose, began to speak with great fondness of the play of rapier and dagger, to which, 'Why, it is among my special favourites too,' cried Knighton, 'and what a pity it is not more employed on the stage!'

'In *Hamlet*, for instance,' said D'Andras, 'where it is clearly intended.'

'And in many another popular play—*Faust*, for one.'

'Ah,' said D'Andras, 'if only we had the weapons here you and I, Mr. Knighton, might illustrate both fights. If only,' he added, with a look of boyish mischief, 'the Abbé would, in the latter case, play the third part to your *Faust* and my *Valentine*!'

Knighton, who suspected that the Abbé did not love D'Andras overmuch, would not have been surprised if the trivial jest, though it was uttered with a charming, apologetic, and even deferential air, had been coldly received. The Abbé, however, gave one of his rare smiles, said something lightly about the part demanding a certain fascination, and turned the discourse to old sword-play in general, showing by his brief remarks that he knew the subject thoroughly. Then Paradol proposed an assault between D'Andras and Knighton, saying that he could provide the Englishman with all necessary equipment. So the assault took place, and a very pretty one it was; for it was evident that, had they been playing seriously instead of in mere pleasant courtesy, the combatants would have been very evenly matched, and that without the fact that a long phrase for *la belle* ended in a *coup double*, for which it really seemed that neither was to blame. As they changed from fencing to ordinary attire they paid each other sincere compliments.

'But oh!' said D'Andras, with youthful enthusiasm, 'how I should like to meet you at rapier and dagger!'

'Why not,' answered Knighton, 'if you ever come to London?'

'I shall probably be there in a fortnight or so.'

'Good! Then I can find the weapons if you will come to Grison's.'

'Excellent!' cried D'Andras. 'Little Grison is a capital fellow. I met him at Brussels. We shall meet again, I hope, before you leave Paris.'

'And we will try to fix a day,' answered Knighton, who soon afterwards went away in company with Boisrose.

'A pretty fencer, Monsieur d'Andras,' said the Abbé, as they walked. 'Of course, he was not doing his best; nor were you.'

'No. If we were both put to it, it might be an exciting match. Yet I have a fancy he might press me hard enough to tempt me to a Jarnac stroke, were not such a thing impossible.'

'Nothing,' said the Abbé, somewhat sententiously, 'in these days of radium and other wonders can be called impossible.'

'Well, I at least will try my best when we come to rapier and dagger.'

'And,' said the Abbé, 'may I be there to see!'

III.

It did, indeed, fall out that before the Knightons left Paris for their home in London there were other meetings, chance and of set purpose, between them and their friends, old and new. But as to these encounters a few matters only call for mention. For one thing, Viola's liking for the Abbé's society certainly did not diminish; while Everard, though he naturally preferred revisiting old haunts with Derwent and other old friends, yet always found some interest in Boisrose's by no means bubbling talk. On one occasion, when the Abbé had come alone to see the Knightons, Viola had found occasion to tell him the story of two strange fencing matches which Everard had had with two strange fencers, in each of which there had seemed to be a mysterious connection with Everard's use of an exclamation once habitual with him—'May the devil fly away with me if I don't do so-and-so!' The Abbé listened intently to her greatly compressed yet vivid account of the circumstances, but said never a word when she finished. Everard broke the silence.

'You may well say that there *seemed* to be something mysterious about the meetings and the implied wager, though, on my word, Abbé, the German experience had a queer effect on me at the time. But if elves, wood-demons, fairies, and the rest ever leave the earth—and I hope they won't—surely Germany will be their last stronghold. As for my wife, I believe she is still firmly convinced there is "miching mallecho" in the matter, and when a woman has an unspeakable conviction in her mind—'

'You may be sure'—the Abbé filled the hiatus—'it has been planted there by instinct, which is often superior to reason.'

'The Abbé,' said Viola, 'has come nobly to my rescue, and I hope he will stay awhile and comfort me with more wisdom while you go gallivanting, as you promised, with Mr. Derwent. I see you are looking anxiously at the clock.'

D'Andras they met only twice again, once with St. Michel and once with Derwent. On the last occasion he told them that business letters had summoned him at once to England, to Lincoln among other places, and that he would shortly be in London. So then and there they fixed a provisional date for a meeting at Grison's, to be followed, Everard hoped, by others there and at his and Viola's house. Derwent expressed a great desire to see the Englishman and the foreigner try conclusions with rapier and dagger, 'and,' he said, 'it is a desire which I shall do my very best to gratify. I have promised the Abbé to show him a little of London if I can get away for a few days from my slavery here.'

'Your slavery,' cried Viola, 'when you know you are monarch of all you survey!'

'Well, well,' said the other, 'my employers are very indulgent to me, though how anyone can be a journalist when there are brooms and crossings to be had!' And so, grumbling and fussing, he had hustled away with his truncated sentence, accompanied by D'Andras.

Soon after the Knights' return to London Everard wrote to Hugh Desvignes, the Orientalist and traveller, who was a contemporary and, as we know, an old friend of his, addressing the letter to the club he most frequented, asking him to come and dine quietly. Desvignes, a tall, straggling kind of personage, with a most unmistakable air of distinction, came accordingly, and was in due time acquainted with the history of the sword, which was produced for his inspection. No sooner had his eyes travelled thoroughly over it than they gleamed as might the eyes of a thorough and learned librarian at the sight of some rare and ancient MS.

'This,' he said, 'is something far out of the common.' And then he studied it long and carefully under the light of a lamp and by the aid of a magnifying-glass. When he looked up the excitement in his eyes was yet plainer to be seen. 'The writing,' he said, 'is very minute, and there is a good deal of it on the blade. That on the crossbar—what is your technical name?'

'Quillons,' suggested Viola.

'Ah, quillons,' he continued. 'The lay mind gets mixed up with them and the *pas-d'âne* and other details. Well, then, it's

more microscopic still, and I shall want daylight and a stronger glass to do myself justice with both ; but, on my word, the thing is surprising—nay, astounding !’ And fervour showed itself in his face and his gestures.

‘ But what is it ? ’ cried Everard.

‘ For one thing,’ answered Desvignes, still gesticulating with delight and astonishment, ‘ this writing on the blade is in the ancient Himyaritic script in the Kahtanic dialect, and, so far as I can make out—just think of it—the purport is that the blade was forged by the builder of the great Dyke of Marib, near the capital of the Queen of Sheba ! Prodigious ! ’

‘ So prodigious that it sounds impossible,’ said Viola.

‘ As the Abbé said,’ observed Everard, ‘ nothing is impossible in these days—not even finding out that in those days people were as clever as in these.’

‘ Boirose—ah, yes ; a remarkable man,’ said Desvignes ; ‘ but really I can think of nothing but this very unsettling sword. I long to make it all out. I hardly dare to ask—’

‘ If you may carry it off to your den to inspect at your own sweet will,’ said Everard. ‘ You must ask Viola. She has acquired such an affection for it, helped, I think, by Boirose, that I have made it solemnly over to her.’

‘ Of course,’ said Viola, ‘ take it, and keep it as long as you like.’

‘ As long as is necessary to decide about it,’ said Desvignes. ‘ I really cannot thank you enough.’

‘ I am puzzled,’ said Everard, ‘ as to the metal of which it is forged.’

‘ I can make a guess at that,’ said Desvignes, ‘ but I must ask an expert friend in the Museum ; and the inscription may tell me more when I can make it out better.’

He renewed his thanks, and presently departed in a four-wheeler, hugging the sword as if it were a bag of diamonds, and leaving his host and hostess strongly touched with his own excitement.

The next day brought a call from Derwent and the Abbé, who had arrived in London the night before, and who, each in his own way, were deeply interested by the first result of Desvignes’s examination of the sword. When conjecture and comment had been for the moment exhausted, ‘ By-the-by,’ said Derwent, ‘ when is your proposed meeting with D’Andras ? ’

‘ Three days from now,’ said Everard ; ‘ but I have not heard from him.’

'Then, my dear fellow, you may be pretty sure he'll turn up. He's always most punctilious about engagements. St. Michel, who sent all kinds of messages, was speaking with admiration of that trait in him only two nights ago.'

'Monsieur St. Michel,' said Viola, 'discerns a soul of goodness in—in everything'; and then she coloured, and quickly turned the conversation, soon after which Derwent departed to the London office of his paper, carrying Everard with him. Boisrose stayed a while to talk with Viola, and then went off to see Desvignes.

That evening came a letter from the Orientalist to Viola beginning with congratulations on her having become the owner of what seemed a marvellous acquisition, 'for,' the letter continued, 'if my colleague and I are not mistaken, everything I at first thought about it is correct, and more. We cannot see any room for trickery, but it may take time to settle the question. Therefore, do not take all I say for gospel, but as far as we can judge the sword *was* forged by the builder of the Dyke of Marib, and was forged from the leaded irons with which he clamped the stones of that great work. The sword belonged by gift to Sulayman, son of Asuf, Daud's famous Vazir. What happened to it after it passed into his hands who can tell? It was Asuf who sent the Queen of Sheba back to her own place in a carpet after her visit to the Wise King.'

'And the sword belonged to Asuf's son,' said Viola. 'Then it must be—oh! how old?'

'About three thousand years,' said Everard. 'He may well call it a marvel. But go on with the letter.'

'He goes on to say that the very minute writing on the quillons offers more difficulties than the rest because here and there a bit or a scrap is chipped away. It is not, like the rest, in Kahtanic Arabic. He and the Abbé are hard at work on it, but they would both like to consult another authority as to the tiny missing fragments. Now, I never knew that the Abbé himself had Oriental lore enough to work hand in hand with Hugh Desvignes.'

'And I,' said Everard, 'always supposed that the Abbé knows more about most things than he lets on to know. However, if we had not found out for ourselves that Boisrose is a gentleman, his being a pal of Hugh's would be warrant enough for the fact.'

'Yes,' answered Viola, with a touch of her occasional flitting dreaminess; 'and Monsieur d'Andras is a gentleman.'

'Who's a-denying of it Betsy? But I thought you didn't care particularly for D'Andras, in spite of his charm?'

'And I thought,' said Viola, smiling, 'that you knew I'm not blinded by prejudices, except, perhaps, in one instance.'

'Merci du compliment,' said Everard, 'for all it's double-edged. By-the-by, I found a letter from the very D'Andras at the Babel when I looked in just now. It comes pat on what Derwent said. He will be at Grison's at six o'clock three days from now. Very sorry he can't call here first.'

'That will be Friday,' said Viola. 'You chose the tryst on purpose, I suppose.'

'To have the place to ourselves—yes. But I must see Grison about it. It begins to darken early, and we shall want the electric lights.'

'Also,' said Viola, 'you must practise.'

'Yes; and Grison, as you know, holds rapier and dagger for a toy merely. Never mind, I'll knock up Galt and get him to give me a turn.'

On the afternoon before the meeting with D'Andras was to take place the Abbé called at the Knights. Everard had gone to Grison's, and, therefore, Viola alone received his information that by the next day the interpretation of the writing on the strange sword ought to be complete, and that he would bring it and the weapon together.

'If you do not come here earlier,' said Viola, 'will you join us at Monsieur Grison's? We shall have the place to ourselves. How do you think the match will end?'

'I think,' said the Abbé, 'Monsieur d'Andras will lose'; and there seemed to be an unnecessary graveness underlying his reply, as also her very natural question.

On the Friday fixed, at half-past five, Monsieur Grison's *salle d'armes* was swept and garnished after the departure of the ordinary pupils, and the little Gascon was doing the honours to Viola, Everard, Derwent, and Galt, who had remained specially after the regular 'pupil-room' hours. To him Grison had been discoursing of D'Andras when the others came in. 'As I was explaining to Mr. Galt,' he said, 'I was much taken with your friend when I met him at Brussels. The most charming manners and manner! He ought—forgive me the enthusiasm—to have been a Frenchman!'

'Whereas,' said Galt, 'he is——'

'A Pole, a Hungarian, what you will, but certainly a Slav; is it not so, Mr. Derwent?'

'I think so,' said Derwent; and the other ran on; 'And

charming as a fencer too ! Ah, Mr. Knighton, if only your assault was to be with foil or *épée* instead of those barbarian knives and forks !

‘ Well, perhaps,’ said Everard, ‘ after what you call the knives and forks we may go to your own weapons.’

‘ And you will make a good match of it. But, mark you, Mr. Knighton, I have never seen Monsieur d’Andras put out his best strength. In that he resembles another stranger, Monsieur—ha ! Monsieur Manteuffel, whom we have seen here—hey ? ’

Viola gave a little start, and Knighton was about to reply when, on the very stroke of six, D’Andras appeared and greeted the assembled company, among whom Galt was the only one he did not already know, with his usual air of gaiety, under which Viola had thought to detect a constant lurking sadness. After D’Andras and Everard had changed into fencing get-up, they went through the fencing salute with foils, at Grison’s special request. Galt watched them with his always critical attention, and said to Everard, while he was afterwards helping him to look up the knife-and-fork rattletaps, as Grison called them : ‘ I doubt if you can give that fellow many points at any weapon he knows well.’

‘ You can’t judge from the salute,’ said Everard, a trifle sharply, ‘ but I think you may be right.’

Then Knighton and D’Andras took up rapier and dagger for a sort of preliminary skirmish. As in this they employed very lightly and cautiously, and even with preliminary warnings, the cuts which modern fencers in loose assaults eschew, using the point only of the cumbrous weapons, this kind of sham fight taught the spectators nothing, but it was pretty enough in its way. Specially noteworthy was Knighton’s guard, with dagger and rapier crossed above the head, for the *mandritto*, or direct cut at the skull, delivered by D’Andras. So successful was it that D’Andras’s rapier slipped off it and fell clattering to the ground. It was while tricks of this nature were still toward that the Abbé entered with a sword—the sword—under his arm, went straight to Viola, and said : ‘ It is all deciphered.’

‘ Good,’ she answered. ‘ I am sure you will find a fitting time for reading it out to us.’

Then the two adversaries arranged the terms of the assault.

‘ What do you say,’ said D’Andras, ‘ to this ? Everything to count up to three, and if we are three all, *la belle* to decide.’

‘ Good,’ said Knighton, a little fired with the coming encounter,

'et [I give the French words for once] si je ne l'emporte pas "je veux bien, je veux bien que le diable m'emporte."' "

'Hallo, old chap!' Galt began, and, suddenly catching Viola's eye, as suddenly stopped—why he could not tell at the moment. Afterwards he thought that Everard, speaking and quoting in French, had spoken unconsciously, as it were, and that Viola knew it.

Then the rapier and dagger assault began. They came on guard, Everard in *prima guardia*, the right hand holding the rapier high at extension, the dagger hand low and in front, D'Andras in the *quarta guardia*, with its more subtle air of menace, the rapier extended towards the adversary's midriff, the dagger-hand with the arm bent just behind and above the head. There were various movements to and fro and sideways, stately and stealthy, and then, on D'Andras's disengagement, Everard made a time thrust by an adroit 'pass.' One to Knighton. In the next phrase D'Andras scored by a disengagement under the dagger of Knighton. One all. In the next, Knighton feinted, parried D'Andras's attempted 'time,' and, coming forward with the left leg, got in his dagger-point. Two to one, Knighton leading. The next phrase, a long one, was won by D'Andras, who distracted Knighton by a threat in the low line with the dagger, and almost simultaneously scored by a rapier lunge on the high line. Two all. Then, as D'Andras advanced, Knighton swung his left foot sideways, and, beating the other's blade aside and up with the dagger, caught him with the rapier point in low quarte. Three to two, Knighton leading. Silent excitement had grown all this time. On resuming, the two combatants played with extraordinary wariness, advancing, retreating, nearly circling round each other, until D'Andras, drawing a lunge from Knighton, met it by a backward lunge and got his dagger-point home. Three all, and a pause by mutual unspoken consent. Galt thought that he detected a flame of expectant triumph in D'Andras's eyes when he removed his sabre-mask. Viola sat unmoved, but looked at the Abbé, who, coming forward, said:

'May I fill up this breathing time by reading out the completed translation of a puzzling inscription on this sword, with which some of us are acquainted?'

'Ah, do! The very thing,' said Derwent.

The Abbé walked a step or two, which brought him close to one of the electric lights, took the sword from its scabbard, and

held it, as if on guard, in front of him and full under the light. D'Andras stood half-facing him, a few inches from the naked point. 'I will read it,' said the Abbé, 'first in the original tongue.' Then he cast one look at the sword, and then, with a sudden sonorousness of command in his voice, he uttered these words: '*Labbaykk : Lâbbaykk : Ya Rahman : Min Shaytan Rajim.*'

At the second word a heavy screen at the end of the room fell crashing down; at *Rahman* its twin near the Abbé followed the example; then, with a rending and a roaring noise a great picture of an old fencing match came like an avalanche to the middle of the floor; and on the last word, while the boards still rattled and quivered from the shock, all the lights went out. In a moment they were switched on again, but there was such a cloud of dust from the fallen furniture that for a few moments it was impossible to see clearly. Then, as little Grison bustled about, Derwent cried: 'But where is D'Andras?' They all looked about. Certainly D'Andras had disappeared.

'He must have gone out in the confusion,' said Grison.

'To be sure,' said Derwent, 'no one would have heard him if he had gone by the door.'

'Or a trap-door,' muttered Galt.

'I knew,' continued Derwent, 'he was as nervous as a cat, but who would have thought he'd bolt?'

'Monsieur d'Andras,' said the Abbé, 'is, I take it, not wanting in courage, but nerves, as you say, play—'

He stopped, and Galt added: 'Old Harry with anybody.'

Before they broke up Galt exchanged a few words with Viola and Everard, and found that they, like himself, could have sworn that just before the lights went out they saw D'Andras falling straight on the point of the sword in the Abbé's hand. This they kept to themselves. When Boisrose went back to dine quietly with the Knightons—Derwent was engaged—they asked him for a translation of the words he had uttered.

'Here,' he said, 'are Desvignes's notes: "*Labbaykk* is supposed to be an invocation. The pilgrims shout it to each other at Mecca. For exact meaning it is as doubtful as *κόγξ ὄμπαξ*. The other words mean: "O Merciful, against Satan the lapidated [aid]." They stone Satan every year at Mecca. I do not think we shall see Monsieur d'Andras again, and I do think that Mr. Knighton will have no more trouble with strange adversaries.'

'I,' said Viola, 'feel sure of it. Thank you, Abbé.' The thanks were given with feeling.

'Well,' said Everard, 'it seems, Abbé, you helped me through with a Jarnac stroke after all.'

'It was a doubly fair one,' said the Abbé.

W. H. POLLOCK.

Wind and Wave.

FULL is the air of the voice of the sea,
 Full of the voice of the clamorous sea,
 Voice of the hungry insatiate sea !

Like famished wolves on the scent of the prey,
 White-crested eager waves rush to the shore,
 Leap in wild tumult on rock and on reef;
 Striking with thunder the face of the cliff,
 Uprearing a moment above the wild sea—
 Break and dissolve in a welter of foam.

Loud shouts the north wind, the white horses hear,
 While flies the foam from their far-streaming manes,
 Springing, foam-footed, through fields of the sea,
 Urged by the rush of the oncoming wave.

Wind! blow thy trumpet and make thyself heard,
 Check the white horses that spring to their doom,
 Shout to them, shout, that they leap not on shore,
 Leave not their pastures where green waters roll !

Great and resistless their might on the sea,
 Terror and wonder alike to behold,
 Powerless on shore they wax feeble and halt—
 Break and dissolve in a welter of foam.

L. BALDWIN.

Some August Days in Japan.

IT is in the spring-time, the far-famed cherry-blossom time, when all Japan makes holiday beneath spacious canopies of pink and white bloom, or a little later, when the giant wistarias display their hanging mauve trusses, while irises, tree-peonies and azaleas create a riot of colour in the land, or else in autumn, after rains and storms have passed away and the woods are arrayed in scarlet and gold, that the ever-increasing army of tourists from the West is wont to overrun these pleasant Eastern resorts, testifying to its appreciation thereof in the shrill, nasal, or guttural accents of the divers nationalities which it represents. During the summer, travellers, save such as are bound for the mountains, are warned off from Japan by the guide-books. July and August are months of oppressive, damp heat and frequent rains; flowers, except the lotus, are few at that season, and the mosquito is a burden.

However, seasons vary, and on this brilliant August day there is no rain nor sign of any in dusty Tōkyō—has been none, they say, for weeks past. The Genza, that wide main thoroughfare of the Mikado's capital, with its incongruous tramcars and multitudinous, perspiring foot-passengers, is baking and shimmering in the heat; the untiring little jinrikisha-man in the shafts, whose white mushroom hat goes bobbing along on a level with your feet as you sit beneath a sun umbrella, has to mop his brow continually, though he never relaxes his pace; the masons, busy over their work of demolition and deplorable reconstruction, have discarded all the clothing that can be decently discarded in a city so bent upon becoming European of aspect and habit. The transmogrifying process is being carried out only too rapidly and thoroughly. Everywhere the old wooden houses, with their overhanging tiled roofs, are coming down, to be replaced by meaningless, unsuitable, flimsy structures of brick and stucco; Europe, or rather America,

¹ Written in 1903.

is being reproduced here with a fidelity as unflattering as a photograph to the commonplace original. The transition effect is depressing. It does not, somehow, seem to imply progress, or at least not progress in the right direction. One has the impression (wrongly perhaps, yet unavoidably) of a vulgar degeneration. Happily, Japan is a land of almost incessant earthquakes.

For the rest, it is easy, and does not take very long, to escape from the dust and noise and bustle of the streets to the seclusion of the Shiba Park, where, girdled by overarching trees and enclosed by rotting black palings, are the mortuary temples of the Tokugawa Shōguns, who for two centuries and a-half ruled Japan from the old Yedo, which has not yet been completely converted into new Tōkyō. Here at least one has no sense of change, beyond that wrought by lapse of time, stress of destructive weather, and, unfortunately, lack of care. For the shrines of the Shōguns are not much frequented, and the priests in charge are said to be poor—so much so that repairs are visibly neglected. But the work of the patient, laborious artists who adorned these temples, into the twilight of which one penetrates through courts filled with the customary stone lanterns, is virtually imperishable. Employing only the very best materials, they could brave decay. Gold lacquer may have been a little rubbed here and there, colours may have faded somewhat; but the exquisite wood-carving remains sharp and clear, the metals and crystals and inlaying cannot crumble away. Here we have the last word of decorative art; not to be surpassed, nor ever again, one surmises, to be equalled; for never and nowhere again, if an ephemeral denizen of this hurried, narrowed world may venture to prophesy, will such years recur as those in which Japan, closed against foreigners and self-sufficing, could carry out tasks in hand with so fine a disregard of the pecuniary value of the passing hours.

Of course, such conscientious finish of minutest detail does not make for general effect. Here, as everywhere in Japan, there is a suggestion of disdain for facile ostentation, a hint of secrecy, mystery, dignified reserve, characteristic of a people whose habitations are of the barest simplicity, whose treasured possessions are exhibited only to those who can appreciate them, whose elaborate and charming courtesy veils one knows not what sentiments, opinions, aims. If you wish to enjoy the beauties of the Shiba temples you must look for them, and look rather closely in that semi-darkness. Yet the general effect, whether designedly or not,

is there : an effect at once glorious and mournful, which fitly commemorates departed rulers and an abolished system of rule. It is very quiet and still among these shrines and tombs ; the clomp, clomp of wooden clogs is heard only at intervals in the courts that surround them ; the hum of the living city comes but faintly and fitfully upon the breeze which sets the leaves overhead rustling ; the one persistent sound is the peculiar dirge-like croak—*Ah ! ah ! ah !*—of ravens, hovering always above the temple roofs.

Ravens are long-lived birds, and to be old is to be conservative. If they lament the vanished magnificences of Ieyasu and his successors, of feudal daimyōs and attendant samurai, of a civilisation which needed not to borrow or imitate, unless from that neighbouring civilisation on the mainland whence it took its start, possibly they may have some human congeners in this abruptly revolutionised country. Possibly, and, one would imagine, probably ; although there is not much to confirm conjecture in that direction. Something in the nature and genius of the race—patriotism, perhaps, or the ingrained habit of obedience, or one of the many forms of Oriental fatalism—seems to lead them towards a ready and cheerful acquiescence in the decrees of their rulers. Without audible murmurs they accept all that has been thrust upon them : the preposterous buildings, the greatly increased cost of living, the absurd European costume (which is now obligatory, at least at Court), the substitution of European laws, customs, and methods of government for those which, through long use and wont, must have become dear to their hearts. And for what equivalent ? Once upon a time, when Napoleon III. passed for an ambitious would-be conqueror, and certain small States lived in fear of their formidable neighbour, a fire-eating subject of his was engaged in controversy with a Genevese professor upon the drawbacks and advantages of annexation.

‘*Mais, monsieur,*’ he exclaimed at last, ‘*ça vous est-il égal de pouvoir dire Je suis Fr-r-rançais ou d’avouer que vous êtes*’—and here he dropped his voice to a demure whisper—‘*Suisse ?*’

Is it or is it not worth some sacrifice of personal convenience to belong to a great nation ? Does patriotism necessarily mean ambition to see one’s nation powerful, or will desire for the blessings of unobtrusive prosperity suffice ? Be that as it may, the intense patriotism of the Japanese is beyond dispute, and when some forty-five millions of human beings are admittedly patriotic, intelligent, docile, and fearless, they are likely to go far, provided

that they have capable leaders. Japan, we are assured, does not dream of becoming paramount in Asia ; her legitimate aspirations have been formulated over and over again ; if only these can be realised, she will not ask for more ; the Yellow Peril is a ridiculous bogey. Perhaps so.

Meanwhile, on this sultry August day our Tōkyō friends profess to be seeking peace and ensuing it. They have been told that they must really be reasonable, and have smilingly replied that if they are anything, they are that. Fight Russia single-handed ? Oh, but of course not ! Not, at least, unless their very existence as a nation should be threatened ; in which case, naturally, they would have to defend themselves to the best of their poor ability. They quite understand that the Great Powers cannot and will not be drawn into a general war for the sake of their *beaux yeux*. Glittering, obliquely set, heavy lidded little boot-buttons of eyes, which reveal nothing, but see all that there is to be seen ! If the Japanese are as inscrutable as diplomatists, merchants, and travellers unite in pronouncing them, they probably have not the same complaint to make of us, our ingenuous Western motives and methods lying so very much upon the surface—for the admiration or otherwise of the contemplative.

Well, let us give ourselves the pleasure and amusement of watching them in their surface aspect, since we are not likely to penetrate far beneath it. A foreigner may watch them for a long time without ceasing to be pleased and amused. Simple, kindly, good-humoured folk, one would say ; devoted, as everybody has noticed, to children and boundlessly patient with them ; not unlike good children themselves, and certainly most unlike descendants of the truculent warriors whom their artists love to depict. The well-knit little soldiers of to-day, in their clean white linen uniforms, look fit for work, it is true, but convey no impression of the suppressed cruelty and lust for blood which are so unmistakably legible upon the rascally visages of the Chinamen whom they put to confusion nine years ago. Numbers of them are strolling—hand in hand generally—about the Ueno Park on the other side of the city, a more popular place of resort than Shiba. Here, in shrines not less superbly adorned than those which we have quitted, lie six more dead Shōguns ; here, too, is the famous avenue of cherry-trees, which attracts thousands of visitors from all districts in spring ; and here a lake, charmingly starred just now with lotus flowers. The air is heavy, the heat and glare are overpowering ; but the

little strollers do not seem to mind. It is impossible (at least if Western standards of beauty are to be accepted) to call them anything but ugly; yet one almost loves them, and is altogether grateful to them, for wearing an aspect so free from care. Our parks and streets at home can show nothing like that for the consolation of wayfarers who have themselves left the age of gaiety behind. Troubled, harassed, despairing, or dully vacant, the faces that keep flitting past you there have fifty tales to tell; but barely among a hundred will you detect one which bespeaks a contented owner. In Japan the apparent percentage of discontent is as small. Nowhere else in the world are people to be found so universally, so palpably enamoured of sheer existence. Yet they have little or no objection to being killed. Is that because the Christian privilege of looking forward to a possible eternity of torment is denied to them, or because with them love of country is not nominally, but quite simply and unfeignedly, stronger than the love of life itself?

It is a life-loving, laughter-loving crowd that swarms round about the great Buddhist temple of Kwannon, the thousand-handed Goddess of Mercy, that strange, busy, noisy place, thronged with dealers in toys, charm-sellers, loungers, clucking poultry—possibly a few pilgrims or worshippers. Many *ex-votos*, in the shape of pictures and lanterns, adorn the structure, lending it the aspect of a cheerful pagan Lourdes. The great hall of the temple stands open; clogs and sandals are not removed by the multitudes who make a thoroughfare and a meeting-place of it. But the altar, resplendent with gilding, flowers, lighted lamps and candles, is shut off by a wire screen, behind which some priests are nasally chanting.

In the Asakusa gardens, hard by, a species of permanent fair is held, with the usual accompaniments of performing bears, monkeys, jugglers, and so forth; also a quaint show of marionettes, which skip nimbly through interminable dramas without wearing out the patience of the enthralled spectators. In one of these the scene descends at length to the bottom of the sea, where intrepid divers do battle with submarine monsters and an improbable crocodile or alligator gobbles them up for their pains, to the huge amusement of the audience.

The day wanes, the sun sinks, the shadows of evening close in, bringing no abatement of the heat. The little people begin to stream back citywards, chattering, laughing, manipulating their

paper fans. How can one take them seriously? How can it be supposed that they will ever be so crazy as to match their strength against that of the grim Northern giant whom they must, nevertheless, face one of these days in deadly combat, unless they are prepared to accept virtual vassaldom without striking a blow? They are, no doubt, a fighting race, little as they have the air of it, and their shores have never been menaced with invasion since Kublai Khan's Mongol fleet was dispersed by them some six centuries ago; but the question which still remains a question is whether their abrupt and unreserved adoption of a civilisation which is not theirs will have the results for which alone so much that was more or less definitely theirs has been flung away. Success justifies all measures, courage often commands success, and fortune favours the brave. Yet surely among these millions of bold innovators there must be doubting spirits not a few who, if they say nothing, look forward with dismay to the perilous future and backward with a sigh to the days of Japan's grandeur and isolation under the Tokugawa dynasty, which refused all dealings, peaceful or warlike, with outer barbarians. As the swift jinrikisha skims past those silent, withdrawn temples of the old Shōguns in the fading light, the ravens, poised overhead, renew their monotonous wail—*Ah! ah! ah!*

A hundred miles away from sweltering Tōkyō, and 2000 feet or thereabouts above the sea-level, lovely Nikkō affords shade and comparative coolness to exhausted travellers. Nikkō, embosomed in greenery, traversed by a tumbling torrent, walled in by peaked mountains, and famous all the world over as the last resting-place of the great Tokugawa Shōgun and his grandson, is a straggling village which can never, one rejoices to think, be deprived of its quite special and peculiar natural beauty. It contains, to be sure, quasi-European hotels and a fair number of European and American tourists; but the former, even if they were ugly (which, happily, they are not), could scarcely offend the eye, so concealed are they by screens of trees and flowering shrubs; while as for the latter—well, one must submit to the consequences of having been born in the nineteenth century.

Hither, early in the seventeenth, when Japan had been hermetically sealed against alien intruders, were conveyed for final sepulture the remains of Ieyasu, founder of his dynasty, and perhaps no dead man on the surface of this planet is more regally

lodged. From distant Shizuoka they carried his body in solemn procession, taking eighteen days about it, crossing the broad plains and scaling the heights along those straight alleys, bordered by giant cryptomerias, which remain to this day, although their use has been superseded by railways, and on a quiet, wooded summit he sleeps, with the gorgeous mortuary temple which has been erected to his memory beneath him. What, if he could be aroused from his dignified slumber, would he think of the nation which continues to honour him, though it has so diametrically reversed his policy? What would any great man think of his successors? This one, who was a brilliant general, a wise law-giver, a munificent patron of literature and art, belonged to his epoch and appears to have grasped its requirements. His grandson, Iemitsu, who abolished Christianity (for reasons which may well have seemed to him sufficient), and who finally excluded foreigners, lies near him, and is immortalised by a shrine of equal beauty and wonder. These two mausoleums are considered to surpass the Shiba temples at Tōkyō, which, for the rest, they closely resemble. Here, as there, is a bewilderment of colour and detail, an infinite profusion of gold lacquer, of intricate carving, of minute, elaborate design, a suggestion, to tell the truth, of magnified *bonbonnières*. Here, as there, are many courts, with stone lanterns, splendid gateways and pagodas, approached always through the simple but strangely effective *torii*, composed of two upright and two transverse beams or blocks of stone, the latter curved upwards at the ends, which are so characteristic of Japan, although, like everything else Japanese, they are said to have been originally introduced from the mainland. Only here the general result is one of enhanced grandeur, of more spacious symmetry, of a somewhat less grudging concession to spectators who would fain view great achievements as a whole. The Nikkō temples, compared with those of Shiba, are as a symphony to a sonata.

The situation aids—a steep hillside, with long flights of moss-grown stone steps, shaded by solemn, secular cryptomerias, green vistas in which the light is always subdued and where scarcely a sound is heard, save the stirring of the wind in tree-tops far overhead. One is reminded of *zephyris agitata Tempe*. Ieyasu's tomb, which stands on the highest crest, is a simple cylinder of pale-coloured bronze, in which there is said to be an admixture of gold.

If these temples of wood and stone, the work of men's hands, are the chief glory of Nikkō, it has to be acknowledged that they

in their turn are under a deep obligation to Nature, which has provided for them so exquisite and appropriate a setting. The gaiety which is the dominant note of Japanese towns, villages, and landscapes is somewhat chastened here, as if out of respect to the mighty dead; the far-reaching forests, pierced by grassy avenues, for which the evergreen trees furnish a perpetual lofty arch, breathe of inviolable rest and peace; if it could in any way matter what becomes of one's discarded body after death, one might have a fancy for being interred at Nikkō rather than—shall we say?—at Kensal Green or the Woking Necropolis. But although there is a suggestion of gentle melancholy about this mountain gorge, down which the Daiyagawa tumbles impetuously on its way towards the sea, abundant colour preserves it from being sombre. The silvery foam of the torrent, the masses of foliage, the red trunks of the cryptomerias, Nantaizan, the holy mountain, towering soft and blue against the sky, all harmonise and combine to form a succession of vignettes which imprint themselves upon the memory, like certain lines of poetry, because they are so completely satisfying of their kind. One celebrated note, alas! makes default—the sacred bridge of vermilion lacquer, swept away, just a year ago, in a typhoon which wrought terrible havoc all along the banks of the suddenly swollen river, wrecking roads, paths, and embankments, drowning many villagers and rasing their lightly built habitations to the ground. For two centuries and a-half the famous bridge braved storms and floods, never, it is said, needing to be repaired during that time, so solidly was it upheld by its massive stone piers; but—*tant va la cruche à l'eau!* Its day came, and the superstitious, if such there be in the land, may see in its downfall at this particular juncture a sinister omen.

Probably, however, there is not much genuine superstition left among a people resolved to put away childish things. There remain, of course, a host of quasi-beliefs, some of which might be matched upon the banks of the Thames. It is lucky to do this, unlucky to do that; certain numbers or conjunctions of numbers are best avoided; ghosts, goblins, and dragons have not yet been formally exorcised. But upon the whole it would appear that the Japanese national character, which exhibits so many irreconcilable traits to the puzzled European student, is not very readily receptive of the supernatural. The most religious races are apt to be the most superstitious, and everybody knows (or, at any rate, everybody says) that the Japanese are not religious. The educated

among them are rather fond of declaring that religion and morality have nothing to say to one another, and that it does not in the least matter which of the various creeds professed by humanity a man may see fit to adopt, so long as he does his duty. A Japanese does not call himself an adherent of Shintō or of Buddhism; he practises or neglects each impartially, and the priests of both cults subsist side by side in tolerant amity. Such a condition of things, however incidentally instructive to those whose tenets are more charitable than their conduct, seems scarcely compatible with a fervid faith.

On the other hand, large sums of money are always forthcoming for the rebuilding of the temples which are periodically reduced to ashes in this country of frequent fires. The splendid and imposing Higashi Hongwanji temple at Kyōto, recently reconstructed entirely by voluntary and popular subscription, is an instance. Pilgrimages, too, are annually undertaken by hosts of devout folk to distant shrines, mountains or islands. In this very month of August pilgrims by the thousand are pattering through Nikkō on sandalled feet, bound for or returning from the sacred mountain of Nantaizan, whose summit, rising to the respectable height of 9000 feet, dominates the valley. Clad all in white, with 'rain-coats' of straw matting slung across their shoulders, carrying stout staves and literally nothing else in the shape of personal gear, they trudge briskly along the dusty road until it dwindles into the sharp ascent of a zigzag mountain path. They come in bands from all parts of the country and differ slightly, though but slightly to Western eyes, in type. No trace is visible upon those impassive yellow or white faces (by the way, Japanese complexions are quite as often dead white as yellow) of the strained, pathetically eager expression which characterises petitioners at European shrines. Perhaps, being such unexact folk, they do not expect very much; evidently there cannot be a great deal amiss with their physical health, for, in addition to marches of many days across the hot plains, with the probability of being drenched to the skin again and again in this typhoon season, they have to end up with a climb sufficiently trying to wind and limb.

The lazy tourist scales the heights in comparatively luxurious fashion, a pair of coolies being harnessed tandem to his jinrikisha, while a third pushes it from behind. It seems hardly possible to drag or shove a wheeled vehicle up that rough, rocky track; but the thing is done, and done without apparent difficulty. If the

tourist, ashamed of his laziness, insists upon getting out and walking, his muscular little men will nod and grin at him in recognition of a kindly intention, but they do not really care whether he relieves them of their burden or not. At intervals a high-perched tea-house is reached, and then they halt, not because they are tired, but because it is customary to do so, while the tourist, squatting down upon the ground in his stiff, ungainly way, is regaled with sticky sweetmeats and a tiny cup of colourless tea. A coin of microscopic value remunerates the hostess, who promptly drops on all fours, touching the floor with her forehead. Then, if you like to stretch your limbs, you can saunter off to look at the cascade which is sure to be near at hand. Everywhere in this region is the sound of falling water, everywhere is the grateful shade of trees, and, as one mounts higher and higher, the breeze becomes invigoratingly cool. Perhaps a light vapoury cloud sweeps down from the neighbouring cliffs, trails across the track, and is gone.

From time to time the jinrikisha is drawn aside to give passage to a long string of pack-horses, led almost invariably by peasant women, whose costume of tightly fitting breeches or stockings seems as unsuitable to their sex as are the many descriptions of manual labour assigned to them. But in no rank of life does gallantry towards women enter into the Japanese system of ethics. Wealthy or poor, peasant or nobly born, they are given to understand from first to last that their duty and earthly mission are summed up in the one word obedience. They are not ill-treated—unless compulsory hard work be accounted ill treatment—but they are certainly regarded as inferior beings, and they have not yet begun to talk about their ‘rights.’ They will do that soon, perhaps, stimulated by the precept and example of their emancipated sisters from beyond the seas, and then upon a surprised male Japan may descend those boons of feminine equality, feminine oratory, feminine general intervention, which contribute so greatly towards making our own lives bright and happy. In the meantime, all travelled scribes unite in singing the praises of the gentle, merry, helpful, good-humoured Japanese women. Not here shall the ungenerous theory be hazarded that their being what they are is a result of the training that they have been given.

When a height of about 2000 feet above Nikkō, and something over 4000 feet above the sea, has been reached the jinrikisha coolies break into a quick trot; for the path now lies along level, sandy ground, through pine woods, and presently you are upon

the shores of Lake Chiūzenji, a ruffled sheet of blue-green water, hemmed in by steep, wooded banks and high peaks, which might be in Tyrol were it not for the *torii* and temples in the foreground. Chiūzenji is much patronised by merchants and their families from Yokohama, Kōbe, and Shanghai. It is also the chosen summer resort of the foreign Ministers, many of whom are the fortunate possessors of waterside dwellings in this deliciously cool and sequestered spot; ideal habitations, nestling amid trees close above the lake, inaccessible save by woodland paths or, more pleasantly still, by flat-bottomed sampans. Only to set eyes upon them is instantly and unhesitatingly to break the tenth commandment all to pieces.

Not that they have latterly been able to allow themselves more than fugitive glimpses of their mountain Capua, these poor diplomatists; for it is a far cry to Tōkyō, and the international atmosphere, heavily charged with electricity, has required the presence of authorised lightning-conductors. However, it is all right now, or going to be all right, so they say. Diplomacy, it seems, has been discharging its beneficent mission upon the time-honoured lines with which Greeks, Cretans, Armenians, Macedonians, and other interesting, but troublesome, nationalities are mournfully familiar. 'Be good little people; make no disturbance, whatever you do, and when the right moment comes we will all see whether something cannot be managed for you.' The right moment never comes—can never by any possibility come; the little people, weary of well-doing without reward, begin to wonder whether it might not, after all, pay better to be naughty; so they tumble down and crack their crowns, and motherly Europe, whilst applying vinegar and brown paper, reminds them, more in sorrow than in anger, that they have only their own impetuosity to blame for their mishap. If kindly admonitions and nebulous promises have been offered to the Japanese—no longer in these days such a very little people—we may be sure that they have been received in a spirit of grateful courtesy. We may further venture to surmise that precisely how much is to be hoped or feared from '*Les Grandes Impuissances*' is known here, and that a nation which has been steadily perfecting its armaments for ten years past looks forward to fighting its own battles when the 'right moment' arrives.

But why talk or think about such a gruesome eventuality as a big war on these serene heights and in this glorious summer weather? How much better to lie supine beneath a spreading tree, or in the

bottom of a softly cushioned sampan, and forget the distracted world! It is as easy and as satisfying to do nothing at Chiūzenji as on Venetian lagoons; and this is fortunate, since there is nothing to do, unless you care to try your hand at trolling for salmon or lake trout, with which these waters have been well stocked.

Lake Yumoto, 800 feet higher than and eight miles distant from Chiūzenji, is arrived at by a forest path, a bare, grassy plain, and a somewhat precipitous final ascent, down which a torrent dashes in successive cascades. The sulphur springs for which the village of Yumoto is celebrated announce themselves to the nose from afar. The public baths, which are as public as it is possible to be, inasmuch as they stand open to the adjoining road, are freely used by bathers of both sexes, who do not wear bathing-costumes. *Honi soit qui mal y pense!* It is a mere question of conventionality, and the Japanese, who see no reason for keeping their clothes on while washing themselves, are disagreeably impressed, it is said, by the garb which European ladies describe as full dress. The lake itself, set amid barren heights, is not unlike that of Chiūzenji, but is less smiling, somehow. One can readily believe that both Yumoto and Chiūzenji are liable to be transformed into swift, chilly dreariness by the heavy rains for which the district is, unfortunately, notorious.

But this summer of 1903, memorable for its inclemency all over the Western world, has been exceptionally fine in the Far East, and although clouds gather at sunrise and sunset about the summit of Nantaizan, they disperse in a few hours, leaving turquoise outlines to melt into a sky of sapphire or a silvery moon to contemplate her image in the still mirror of the lake. What a joy it must be to forsake malarious seaboard cities and the weary routine of commercial life for this high, cool and restful retreat! Very likely the exiled British merchants, with their wives and children, do not even mind the bad weather (so reminiscent of sweet home) very much when it comes.

'The great pull of this place,' remarks one of them, with unconscious pathos, 'is there being so little about it to remind you that you are in Japan.'

Little or nothing, it must be confessed, so long as you keep your back turned towards the modest village and the temple and the white-clad, straw-hatted pilgrims, plodding steadily along through the dust. But this, whether 'pull' or drawback, does not

prevent Chiūzenji from being what he atrociously characterises as a 'beauty spot.'

At Kōbe, that busy, prosperous port on the Inland Sea, a great wrestling tournament has been appointed to take place, and spectators from every neighbouring town and village have assembled to witness it, notwithstanding the appalling heat—which, for that matter, does not appal them in the least. They seem, indeed, impervious to all extremes of temperature, these remarkable people, who skip unhesitatingly into baths heated well-nigh to boiling-point and brave Arctic cold without wincing. Some six thousand of them are packed together now in the canvas-enclosed circus which is to be the scene of the coming encounters, and although the atmosphere is stifling, one cannot help noticing how much less offensive it is than would be the case in a European crowd of similar dimensions. The Japanese are, without doubt, the very cleanest people in the world. Patient, too, and gaily good-humoured, as always, upon the very uncomfortable and perilously rickety tiers of planks which have been run up to accommodate them.

They are kept waiting a long time before a posse of dignitaries in antique costumes ascend the platform in the middle of the arena. These having seated themselves upon their heels, the wrestlers step forth by bands to do obeisance—big men, deep-chested, and possibly muscular, but so loaded with superfluous flesh that an English trainer would stare at them aghast. They do not, it appears, train at all in our sense of the term, but are, on the contrary, heavy feeders and deep drinkers. How, with such a system of preparation, they contrive to accomplish the feats which they are said to accomplish must remain one of the many mysteries of this land of contradictions. Naked to the waist and wearing gorgeously laced and embroidered aprons (the trophies, perhaps, of former victories?), they strut round the arena, bow profoundly again and again, and withdraw. Then two of them, stripped now to their loin-cloths, reappear, face one another, and the sport, one hopes, is about to begin.

But they are in no hurry to come to close quarters. They crouch down upon their haunches, eye to eye, but some distance apart, change their relative positions very slightly, make some half-feints, scratch up the sand, exactly like a pair of fighting cocks, retire, advance, retire once more, finally rise erect, and strut back

to their seconds, who sprinkle them with water. Half-a-dozen times or more this performance, which may be highly skilful, but which is not a little comic to the uninitiated, is repeated, until on a sudden, like a lightning flash, they are locked together. The struggle, when at last it comes, is quite short. One of the combatants is forced beyond the chalked line of the circle which surrounds the couple, and the bout is at an end. It is not necessary to throw your antagonist: all you have to do is to drive him, upright or prone, outside the boundary.

In the course of the numerous contests which follow there are a few rattling falls; but the length of time spent in preliminaries seems—at least to an ignorant onlooker—rather out of proportion to the brief excitement of the actual fray. The thing is almost as tedious to watch as first-class billiards. However, the temptation to scramble out, jump into a *jinrikisha*, and seek a breath of fresh air on the hillside must be resisted until the great event of the day, which is to bring together the champion of Kyōto and the champion of Osaka, has come off.

The champion of Kyōto is a huge, shapeless mass of obesity, appears to be middle aged, and cannot, one would think by the look of him, be altogether sound in heart and lungs. Somebody shrilly asserts that he has never been beaten. Osaka's representative is sparer, younger, and more wiry. Evidently he has numerous adherents, and one unenlightened alien would be prepared to back him at even money if any takers were to be found. However, he scores nothing by the prompt vigour of his attack upon the fat man; for the latter catches his right arm below the wrist as in a vice, throws it up aloft, and so for an instant holds him in imminent peril of being thrown off his balance. Only for an instant, though. Osaka's long left arm winds itself round Kyōto's mountainous bulk and clutches the back of his loin-cloth; Kyōto's massive left encircles Osaka's ribs; the right arms of both remain upraised, rigid and motionless, while both pairs of legs, firmly planted upon the sand-strewn platform, but with starting muscles, resist the tremendous pressure which one divines rather than sees. And thus, amidst breathless silence, they stand minute after minute, neither yielding by a hair's breadth, neither visibly distressed, although the sweat begins to run from their glistening bodies. What price Osaka? It looks as if, in a trial of strength so conditioned, sheer weight must end by telling. Presently the umpire, a quaint figure in gay *kimono* and silken *haori*, irresistibly reminis-

cent of an actor in *The Mikado*, rises and begins to prowling round the combatants with soft, catlike strides, fan in hand. After making the circuit of the ring perhaps half-a-dozen times, he taps one of the men on the shoulder with his fan, and immediately they fall apart. Time is up; the bout has ended in a draw.

During the rather protracted interval allowed for repose much excited chattering arises among the spectators, partisan feeling running high, no doubt; but there are no signs of loss of temper anywhere, and hushed expectation falls upon the assemblage once more when the rivals step forth to meet in a second essay. The umpire places them carefully on the precise spot and in precisely the same posture as when they were separated; which seems a little hard upon Osaka, who is somewhat at a disadvantage through his right arm being held, so to speak, in chancery. However, he has an air of confidence which should be reassuring to his friends, and one guesses, without quite knowing why, that he means to employ a more active system of tactics this time. Almost at once, indeed, he does something (exactly what he does only a quick and skilled eye could detect) which causes his colossal opponent to sway perceptibly. A swift change of grip follows; the Kyōto champion throws back one massive leg, then the other, yielding unmistakably, drawing nearer and nearer to the fatal chalk line. Now, friend Osaka, one last, supreme effort, and the day is yours! But Osaka has shot his bolt. Very slowly he, in his turn, has to fall back and resign the inches that he has gained. And now, lo and behold! up flies his right arm as before, and the old position, from which neither competitor seems capable of shifting the other, is resumed. The umpire renews his stealthy, feline gyrations, bending double and flirting his fan; at length comes the tap on the shoulder which proclaims truce, and all is over. There is to be no third encounter; honours are divided; Kyōto and Osaka may retire to their respective borders with laurels undiminished, if unaugmented.

The result, to judge by the applause, gives general satisfaction. Bets, it must be assumed, are off; but were there any on? One likes to think not. Inveterate borrowers though the Japanese are, they have a discriminating gift, and if, in their keenness to grasp the kernel of Western civilisation, they have sometimes assimilated too much of the husk, they have seldom been slow to discover and repair their error. May these wrestling contests, which seem to be their sole form of popular sport, remain for ever free from adjuncts

which bid fair to degrade and destroy most forms of sport in certain other islands that we know of.

Here at last, in Kyōto, is a wet day. Last night there broke over the hill-encircled, grey-roofed city a not unwelcome thunder-storm, accompanied by a veritable deluge, which has now dwindled to a steady, determined drizzle. Through the streets, ankle-deep in mud, splash pedestrians on high clogs, their garments wrapped tightly round their legs, their shoulders protected (more or less) by oil-paper rain-cloaks and flat umbrellas of the same material held above their heads. From the overhanging eaves and gutters streams descend upon these last, which sometimes cause the bearers to stagger; all the swaying lanterns and signs which hang along and across the thoroughfares are woefully bedraggled, and as one pokes one's nose out between the leathern apron and the lowered hood of the jinrikisha, to see how other folk are getting on, one is strongly impressed with the idea that the use of paper is overdone in a climate liable to such visitations. On the other hand, it does not cost much to buy a new rain-cloak or a new umbrella, while, as for mud, the process of removing that from bare legs is swift and easy.

At all events, the bad weather does not seem to keep anybody at home, nor need it prevent the hooded, leather-aproned sight-seer from letting himself be whisked about to the temples, monasteries, parks, and palaces in which the old capital is so rich. Of the former, perhaps the finest and most interesting are the Nishi Hongwanji and Higashi Hongwanji, which adjoin one another and are the headquarters of the wealthy Monto sect of Buddhists. Both are vast treasure-houses of lacquer, bronze, painted screens, and jewelled altars. In the neighbouring monastery, divided by sliding panels, are the usual long suites of empty rooms with polished floors, immaculate matting, coffered ceilings, and wall-paintings on paper, which are but dimly visible on this cloudy day. The cornices of carved wood, representing birds and flowers, are some of them more than a foot thick, and, although pierced, have designs ingeniously differing on the one side from those on the other. What time and patience must have been expended upon thinking them out! The Nishi is called the Mikado's temple, the Higashi that of the people—no misnomer, seeing that it has been rebuilt entirely by popular subscriptions since it was burnt down forty years ago. The total cost is said to have been a million yen (about

100,000*l.*), and it is fully equal to its neighbour both in architectural design and in elaborate ornamentation; which does not look as though either Japanese faith or Japanese art were on the wane.

Is Japanese art doomed to perish? In a pictorial sense it is already dead—never, perhaps, despite its charms of dexterity, poetry, and colour, possessed the elements of permanence or growth. But is it the case that the beautiful painstaking work in porcelain, lacquer, bronze, ivory, and enamel, which to most of us represents what is really glorious in the art of Japan, must cease to be produced under the changed conditions of to-day? Unfortunately, a high authority, the author of *Things Japanese*, seems to think so. He points out—quite truly, of course—that under the old *régime* the Japanese ceramists, lacquerers, workers in metal and enamel, were not hirelings, but artists and clansmen, faithful to their feudal chief. ‘By him they were fed; for him and for the love of their art they worked . . . time was no object . . . there was no public of mediocre taste to cater for . . . the art was perfectly and essentially aristocratic.’ Hence he concludes that ‘it is a mere piece of amiable optimism to suppose that such a tradition can be kept up in the days which have produced that frightful, but aptly descriptive term, “art manufacture.”’

It may nevertheless be permissible, with all proper deference, to take a more sanguine view. Shōguns and daimyōs have passed away; but the old artistic spirit remains among a people who have changed their laws, their customs, and, in some degree, their dress, but who have not changed—indeed, could not change—their national character. Here, to-day, in Kyōto, Namikawa is polishing in his little workshop pieces of cloisonné as charming in design and colouring, as perfect in finish, as any that have ever seen the light of his native land. Another artist of the same name at Tōkyō, who works in a different and, as some people think, an inferior style—but it is a matter of opinion—has more orders than he can execute. At Nagoya, too, whence comes a third form of cloisonné, applied to silver, with the cloisons generally invisible, Kumeno and others are assiduously carrying on the difficult, minute handicraft. These enamellers are enthusiastic, and are not greedy. Although they work hard, their annual output is small, for in the repeated processes of baking which are required many pieces are destroyed. Consequently their wares are expensive. They do not make large fortunes. Doubtless they might, if they cared to turn out rubbish in profusion; doubtless rubbish is turned out in profusion

and fortunes are made. But that matters little so long as what is honestly good and enduring is not choked out of existence. Why, after all, should it be? Given the survival and vitality of the artistic spirit (which must surely be conceded), given a sufficient number of purchasers, native or foreign, to provide the craftsman with a living wage, and it does not seem so desperately optimistic to believe that what has been will continue to be. Hope, moreover, is fortified when one remembers that a very large proportion of the so-called 'old' Japanese porcelain, lacquer, metalwork, and enamelling is not in reality old at all. The finest examples of the microscopically ornate Satsuma ware, for instance, were painted little more than half a century ago, while cloisonné work was brought to its present pitch of perfection long after Commodore Perry, cruising in Far Eastern waters, brought up off Yedō to mention to those whom it might concern that feudalism was out of date. Lacquering, though a very ancient craft, has had quite recent triumphs, which connoisseurs pronounce on a level with those of the best periods, and nothing in the past can exceed for beauty the embroideries, brocades, painted silks, and cut velvets of to-day.

Let it be frankly admitted, all the same, that the actual aspect of Japanese towns is not of a nature to reassure æsthetic persons. It is difficult to understand how or why an art-loving race has endured such hideous disfigurement of its streets. Streets, too, in which fires have ever been so common and so easily kindled! In Kyōto, the home and symbol of old Japan, the capital of many generations of dignified, powerless Mikados, the eye is less distressed than elsewhere by monstrous, inappropriate modern constructions; yet even in Kyōto, alas! are tramcars, electric lights, aggressive telegraph-posts and wires. Indispensable though these accompaniments of twentieth-century life may be, one cannot help feeling that if they are to prevail urban picturesqueness must go, and with it by degrees that appreciation of what is fitting and picturesque which constitutes what we call good taste. One remembers certain European cities once renowned for their beauty and distinction, and one knows of what their municipal authorities have been capable in these latter days.

The end, in any case, is not yet. For many years to come, in all probability, the traveller who knows what to avoid will be able to wander about all day long among the temples and palaces, the hills and gardens of widespread, grey-tiled Kyōto without meeting a solitary European or running against a single telegraph-post. Temples and pagodas innumerable; quaint, stiff gardens, recalling

the tea ceremonies of a bygone period ; vast, scrupulously dusted, vacant palaces—all these, unchanged and unchanging, breathe a gentle defiance to time. If the Imperial pleasure-grounds and the Mikado's *Shishinden*, or Hall of Audience, have something of the forlorn melancholy of an abandoned stage, it is not, after all, very difficult for the imagination to repeople them with the sumptuously attired daimyōs who in days of yore used to come flocking thither along the Tōkaidō, attended by numerous retinues of two-sworded Samurai, to pay their respects to the sovereign recluse. Strangely fated recluse who, after a slumber of centuries, woke up one fine morning, at the bidding of a Yankee sea captain, to find that the actual business of governing was in his hands, and who now, arrayed in a French-looking uniform, prances forth to review troops armed with the latest pattern of rifle !

We may pardon his gallant soldiers their European uniforms, acknowledging that these were demanded by the sheer exigencies of the case ; we may grant that his honourable Ministers must sit henceforth at pigeon-holed writing-tables on suitably upholstered chairs ; it was time, perhaps, to give up sitting on the floor. But we may also hope, not without confidence, that in due season he and his people will perceive what is worth retaining and what is best rejected out of the extraneous civilisation which they have seized with both hands. Surely they will ; for whether they deserve or not the epithets of incomprehensible, contradictory, inscrutable, and the like, which one grows a little weary of hearing applied to them, it is not intelligence nor the sifting faculty that will be denied them even by their least flattering critics. Only the other day a sage newspaper-scribe observed that ' although the Japanese disdain perspective in their pictures, there is no lack of it in their policy.' One is a little reminded of the boarding-school young lady who, in an essay on natural history, alluded to the ' strange and pathetic circumstance that the tortoise, which provides us with such beautiful combs for our back hair, has no back hair of its own.' However, if the journalist meant to call the Japanese perspicacious, who shall gainsay him ?

They have originated nothing, say the captious. No ; but they have very seldom imitated without improving upon the original, and a wise eclecticism is in itself a form of originality, being so rare. Even supposing the worst comes to the worst, and their cities are destined to approximate more and more closely to the utilitarian model that we know too well, they themselves can never quite sink to a corresponding plane of dreary uniformity. The land, to

say nothing of the natural temperament of its inhabitants, will not suffer that. In the future, as in the past, plum and cherry trees will burst forth with each recurring spring into acres of blossom, bamboos will sway and rustle by quiet pools, white foam of mountain torrents will flash between the red boles of lofty cryptomerias, strings of wild geese will take their flight across the pale disc of the moon, the snow-capped cone of Fuji will hover, delicate and phantom-like, in a blue haze between earth and sky. If the Japanese are wanting in originality (but of course they are not), no such reproach can be brought against Japan, which has a character and essence so distinct, so distinguished, so refined, and so inherent that one cannot conceive of it as liable to be vulgarised by any incursion of barbarians.

Viewed from the Kiyomizu heights this evening, Kyōto shows as Japanese and as unspoilt as anybody could wish the ancient capital to be. The rain-clouds have dispersed; the last rays of the setting sun fire tiled roofs, pagodas, and the Kamogawa stream, with its bridges and riverside tea-houses; one gazes down at the groves and avenues of monastery grounds and at a many-coloured crowd which is ascending by stairways or by the sharp acclivity of Teapot Hill, where vendors of cheap pottery and porcelain have their booths, to the high-perched temple of the Thousand-handed Kwannon. It is a shrine of great antiquity, and in much favour with the populace, who wend their way hither to toss pebbles on to the stone lanterns which surround it or coins into the extended sheet beside which a parchment-visaged Buddhist priest squats and taps his insistent gong. Should the cast pebble alight on the lantern and remain there, the suppliant is in luck and will obtain the object of his desire; but perhaps here, as at other shrines, it is a surer plan to employ cash, which cannot miss its mark and should be entitled to its equivalent.

The sun sinks, the brief afterglow and twilight of late summer follow; then on a sudden the whole city, spread out beneath the spectator's feet and sloping up towards them, breaks, as if by enchantment, into a galaxy of tiny sparks, some stationary, some darting hither and thither, like a swarm of fireflies. East and west, north and south, the illumination extends until the entire prospect is a blaze of light. Every householder hangs out a string of paper spheres or cylinders, every man, woman, and child carries one suspended at the tip of a bamboo cane, and presently bonfires leap up into flame on the wooded hillsides; for the *Bon matsuri* has begun, and processions are starting, with measured chant and beat

of drum, from all quarters in honour of this annual feast of lanterns. Witnessed from above, it is the most charming, fantastic, fairylike spectacle that can be imagined; seen at closer quarters in the thronged, narrow streets, it resolves itself into a popular carnival, noisy and hilarious, but perfectly good-tempered. There is no drunkenness, no quarrelling, nor will there be any cracked heads, although the merrymaking is to be prolonged for many hours to come. Not before the night is far spent will lanterns and torches be extinguished, one by one, and the climbing moon look down out of a mother-of-pearl sky upon a city and a population which seem to smile still in their sleep.

W. E. NORRIS.

A Musical Difference.

THE sun has set behind the graceful mountains that make way for and encroach on one another, in endless tiers and slopes and gorges, at the foot of Como Lake; the afterglow has touched and fired a great heap of white clouds that crown the higher peaks of the Colico end, where the Alps begin to make their presence felt; but the gardens and luxuriant terraces that line the water are in quiet shade; the villa, whose loggias girdle that peninsula's point jutting across the lake, has thrown wide its green shutters to the evening air, and, in the cooler shades, pleasure-boats appear in myriads, gay with elegant women lounging on their red cushions.

Upon the little public *piazzi* the townsfolk are slowly gathering to their leisure after the day's work; from narrow, dark streets that climb the hill they drop forth one after another, troops of laughing girls, arm-in-arm, teasing, nudging one another as they glance and note who is who amid the knots of smoking, lounging, singing men who saunter on the quay; mothers with babes in arms or at the breast, careworn and wrinkled women here and there, and children, children, children, without end; they bound down the dark alleys, or creep round the corners playing hide-and-seek; they skip, and run, and dance, and glide on their pretty bare feet, their slender limbs very discernible through the thin cotton skirts of the girls, the scanty breeches of the boys; they are all grace, all life, all fun, and thirst for amusement.

For it is a *festa* night; the bells have been jangling all day in the old Campanile above the *salita*, and now the band is going to play on the *piazzi* yonder, and there is to be a concert under the trees before the hotels.

Now the waiters light the gas-lamps beneath the acacia and rose pergola, the *dogana's* searchlight sweeps the dark water with its white glare, vying with the moon which slowly tops the hill, and the 'concert' assembles. A stout man with bold, black eyes

and gleaming teeth heads the band—his violin under one arm, while he also carries before him an under-sized violoncello.

He looks round to see that his supporters are duly following, and, when they are posted, glances scowling up the dark alley whence all have come. Someone is evidently missing, and in the vague shadow one can dimly see two figures under the eaves.

He coughs, and out of the dark a young woman steps into the gas-lit square—walking slowly, defiantly, somewhat sleepily. She is tall, beautiful, soft-eyed, with full, fine throat upstanding out of a square-cut white bodice.

One of the performers—the flute-player, a youth with a dreamy smile—gazes at her with melancholy eyes; but the conductor also gazes, though his eyes are nowise melancholy, rather mocking, imperious, and unpleasant.

He arranges music on a stand, beckons her to her place, and as she takes the 'cello from him with something of a weary air, he whispers apparently none too gentle words of admonishment, for the tears well to her soft eyes.

A cheap, jangling waltz, none too well executed, leads off the concert, but the little crowd is well enough pleased; the stout conductor is Neapolitan, and leads with plenty of 'go'; the flute-player is a real artist, as they speedily recognise, and, if the 'cellist is no artist at all, and plays many a wrong note which wins her many a muttered rebuke and imprecation, she is so comely that they forgive her, and the coppers fall willingly enough into the plate at the close.

But if the listeners would make excuses, the master will not, and the pathetic eyes of the flute-player, turned deprecatingly upon him, seem only to influence his ire.

The pretty violoncellist, however, seems to take the vituperation with something like scorn; her quiet eyes wander over the heads of the crowd into the dim steepness of the *salita* yonder, and presently, just as the angry conductor has finished solacing himself with the blatant humours of a comic duet with the soprano, and is about to command her services once more—lo, she has forgotten that she owes any services at all! For out of the dark hole that she has been watching, that issues which she has waited for; the bent and feeble figure of an old woman totters forward into the gas-lit *piazzetta*, and, heedless of music and conductor, the girl dashes out through the crowd; she pushes through it till she reaches the old woman, and merrily setting at naught the horrified remonstrance with which the latter lifts her shaking old

hands to heaven, the tall, young figure leads the old one very tenderly forward to the front rank, where the 'nobility' and 'gentry' sit, and places her in a chair at their side.

Every head is turned to look as, with a gay smile and reassuring gesture, she glides back into her place.

'It is her grandmother, who brought her up,' whispers a waiter, shrugging his shoulders deprecatingly, in reply to a question from one of the said 'nobility.' 'What would you have? She is of the place, and if ever the *impresario* performs here, it is always the same story. But she will hear more news of it!' he grins, throwing a thumb towards the big man in the orchestra as he departs with his tray.

And she did hear news of it.

The great wind that, born of those storm-clouds over the distant Alps, swept presently over the limpid lake, was not more furious than the storm of abuse that rushed over that Madonna head when the concert came summarily to an end. The 'gentry and nobility' had all jumped up with little laughs and cries of alarm when the hurricane broke, and gathering dainty skirts together, had rushed into the hotels protected by their cavaliers; the waiters had whipped all the chairs away, the townsfolk had run for shelter like their betters, and the *piazza* was deserted.

Whether this sudden eclipse of his hopes of gain contributed to the overthrow of the big man's self-command, who can tell? Certain it is that in a moment every vestige of it suddenly deserted him.

'Is it for this, then, that I have fed you, taught you'—and he might have added, 'tormented you'—'for six long months?' he shouted, snatching the 'cello from the hands of its lovely but incompetent holder. 'Is it for this that you have led me a devil's life with your stupid face of a Madonna and your stupid ideas of a peasant? Ass that I was to waste my time with you! Talent you had none; but at least you had a little industry and a little submission, and in the end I imagined that you would also have, like others, a little sense to know how a woman succeeds in this world. But since you have none—go, in the devil's name! Go—to your peasants for whom you mortify me before the public—go to those who can deceive you with making saint's eyes. See how they will help you to earn your bread! Ah! yes; now you may cry, and with good reason.'

He was blue to the lips with rage as he waved his large, plump hands in dismissal. But the tears that seemed like to come at earlier reproval were dried now—the Madonna head was high.

'Ah! it is not now that I will cry!' retorted the girl. 'I had patience, God knows! because I had gratitude that you had taken me from the poor and had endeavoured to teach me your art. But it has been too much. If in your art one can earn one's bread only as you intend it, I will arrive to earn it some other way. Since I have no talent, it is anyhow useless. I go, with a good heart, back to those peasants whom you insult—yes, with a very good heart, I swear!'

'Come, *nonna mia*,' concluded she, gliding back to where the poor old woman sat, in the gathering storm, adding her tears to the first heavy drops of heaven; 'do not be afraid. Believe me, it is best so—it is much best so!'

'She is very much in her right,' muttered the good-hearted waiter as he cleared away the last glasses. 'Yes, she is perhaps not so stupid as he thinks—that fat devil! There are those whom the Madonna protects even from such as he—*per Bacco*!'

'No, no, do not fear!' whispered the girl, as with her arm round the neck of the old woman she led her lovingly up the dark *salita*. 'Even though he has taken my bread away with that poor old 'cello of his, I will know how to pull myself out—you will see!'

But the old woman was crying.

'And it is for me, for a poor old good-for-nothing like me, that you have lost your place and all your fine prospects!' she sobbed.

'Well, and for who better?' laughed the girl. 'No, no, I promise you, the prospects that I had were not to my taste. Jealousies—furies—I do not like them. Between one and another one had no peace. And then—mortifications, oh! enough! If I am a peasant, I am not ashamed. No—I am not ashamed!'

And again she kissed the weeping old woman, and laughed softly.

'Ah! It would have been better if you had never gone into the music,' sighed the grandmother. 'I thought to do well—to make a lady of you. But it would have been better if you had married Beppo then; when he had saved good money to buy a boat with— Now, who knows where he is? Who knows if he still thinks of you?'

The old woman sighed and raised eyes to heaven, calling on her saints.

But the young woman blushed in the darkness where none could see, and smiled to herself. For she knew where Beppo was, and she could make a very shrewd guess as to whether he still

thought of her or no, and it was with a really good heart that she reiterated gaily, 'Ah! you will see—it will all be for the best!'

The lightning flashed and spat, and the thunder crashed, and the rain fell in sheets, and she hurried her grandmother within doors.

But when it was all over, and the stars spangled the sky, she peeped out into the cool, rain-washed street, and smiled to herself again. For in the distance a man's voice carolled.

'E se vorrete far con me all' amore,
Vi chiamerò la donna del mio core.'

it sang, and it seemed to voice her thought.

'Dear Madonna,' she murmured softly, 'thou hast protected me in my foolishness, make me now fortunate in a better choice. Reward that poor man—who has truly been patient—reward him, for he is a man of honour.'

ALICE COMYNS CARR.

An Engine-Room Affair.

THE HONOURABLE JOHN OSWALD had quite enough money of his own without there being any need for him to spend his time driving cranky marine engines for such wages as accrue from that somewhat precarious pursuit. His many friends did not understand it; neither did they approve. For months he would live decorously at his rooms in Piccadilly, and behave as an ordinary mortal of his class. Then he would disappear. Later some acquaintance would remark that he had met Oswald masquerading as engineer on a Norwegian tripper, or patching a donkey boiler on a Highland coasting steamer. This was unnecessary and erratic. Therefore, it was also foolishness.

He had served his time with a Clyde firm, and had extracted various special steam certificates out of the examiners of the Board of Trade. He never boasted, but his knowledge of marine engineering extended from the oscillating type of a penny steamboat to the latest form of turbine. He was reported to have assisted at the tinkering up of the flaw-shattered tail shaft of the liner *Ocean Queen* with a thousand souls on board in mid-Atlantic in an equinoctial gale; and he was said to have nearly lost his life when the tubes of a patent water-tube boiler blew out on Lord Lysington's craft—half yacht and half gunboat—in the Caribbean Sea. Then he would come home, and duly attend at Ascot and at Henley like a rational person. He could discuss with equal acumen the skirt dancing of the latest lady professional, or the recent eccentricities of a bilge pump. He had patented a new injection valve; he was an authority on the differing qualities of steam coals. He could tell you, if he liked, of a side of sea life known solely to firemen and greasers. Wherefore, it was not to be wondered at if he came to be regarded askance by the cautious old-fashioned parents of a certain most charming maiden.

When Jack Oswald first met Nora Graham at a country house in Berkshire, he decided indifferently that he didn't like her.

Nevertheless he outstayed his first invitation at the house, and then coolly—as he did most things—requested a second from his host. Soon other visitors learnt tacitly to drop away and leave the two alone. He rode with her; they shared the same punt; she sang to him after dinner. He was a slight fair man with hair just tinging grey around the temples, quiet, active, and determined. She was a tall, dark, graceful girl whose appearance attracted attention everywhere. Directly he realised that he loved her, he asked her gravely to marry him, and—she refused.

The Hon. Jack Oswald forthwith made a voyage to the Black Sea as chief on a grain boat, whose owner was a friend of his, and had no objection to the services of a highly competent engineer at lowest scale wages. Then he quietly returned to his suit as if he had never been rejected, and found that Miss Nora had meantime discovered that she liked him very much indeed. But this was where the parents unexpectedly intervened. There was the stormiest of scenes with old Colonel Graham, and there was a long lovers' walk in Kensington Gardens. This I know, because both of them told me about it afterwards on two consecutive days. Then the business seemed to drop. Jack said she was far too precious to be worried more than possible, and he must wait till something should turn up to help them. Such waiting, however, is wearisome.

In June the Grahams departed to the Mediterranean for a two months' holiday cruise on the *Queen of England*—one of those pleasure steamers with a mixed company of tourists, a brass band, and an itinerary which enticed the unwary by the allurements of Carthage, Athens, and Constantinople. I went in her too, and I thought Miss Nora looked a little tired with life when I met her on the tender at Tilbury. She seemed quite pleased to see me, and asked rather shyly if I knew where Jack was. I didn't; all trace of him had been lost for six weeks, until a bearded, grimy individual emerged from the engine-room hatchway one evening after dinner off Cadiz, and requested me to give him a pipeful of English tobacco.

I handed over a spare tin of my best. That second engineer was Oswald. He warned me against the spreading of scandal, and I undertook the conveyance of a certain message for him to the saloon. He knew I should hold my tongue, and he was really in love, and suffering seriously.

Mrs. Graham is my aunt; I don't think I have mentioned that before. A week later she confided to me that Nora was a good

girl, and seemed really getting over that unfortunate attachment to the Oswald man very well indeed. In fact, she would have been certain it was all forgotten had not her daughter betrayed rather more interest in the ship's engines than was quite seemly in a lady passenger. However, these engineers, as far as Mrs. Graham could see, were a harmless hairy lot. (I afterwards heard that Nora had spoken in the strongest disparagement of Jack's pseudo-beard so that he had nearly cast it from him furnacewards.) Colonel Graham lived in the smoking-room, where he told the same stories with regularity, and Mrs. Graham slumbered for an undue portion of each day. Consequently, when I found that Miss Nora had sufficiently overcome that feminine fastidiousness on the subject of oil to pay surreptitious visits to the regions of crank and cylinder, I was not surprised. Though it was all undoubtedly very wrong and deceitful.

Oswald always avowed that the weeks of that cruise were the hardest in his life. When he was off duty he would see Miss Graham playing deck games with fascinating men who were only too anxious to flirt with her. When he was on duty it was worse, because imagination pictured her encouraging them artlessly. There were the usual concerts and a dance, when he was even driven to stuff up his ears with cotton waste, which no engineer, who feels the pulse of his engines by sound as much as by any other sense, should do. He says no one can appreciate the peculiarities of a passenger vessel properly till he has experienced them from the point of view of a second engineer. The moments of compensation when he was actually able to speak to his adored one were few and far between.

One night, towards the end of the voyage, the crisis came; sometimes it does. The weather was fearfully hot, and the Balearic Islands lay abeam mistily. When you moved on the deck you panted with the exhaustion of the effort, and down in the engine-room the heat must have been terrific. I felt that something was going to happen, because everybody lay about on chairs so complainingly, and gasped. Thunder clouds rolled up from the southward, and fierce lightning streaks glinted through the distant blackness. We were steaming sluggishly into a storm.

The clack-clacking of the engines worried me unreasonably, and I knew that Oswald was down below on watch, sitting and talking to that machinery in lonely solitude. Suddenly from the depths came a muffled crash, followed by the hiss of escaping steam which surged through the engine-room skylight in a manner no steam should do. A hoarse shout rang startled through the

smother. Then the heavy vibration of the whirring propeller ceased abruptly, and there was a moment of nerve-trying silence.

An engineer raced along the deck in his shirt sleeves with visible perturbation. This in itself was unusual. The skipper betook himself to the bridge with speed, and without apology for his abrupt departure from a circle of admiring ladies whom he was entertaining at the time. Next the electric light went out, and amid the confusion and the darkness Nora Graham was clutching my arm, and I heard her voice saying to me quite quietly :

‘Take me to him, please, at once!’

Never was an occasion when a girl had less business in an engine-room. Yet she got there, no one seeming to heed her in the turmoil. She swung herself lightly down the slippery iron ladders, deftly clinging to the shining handrails between the narrow platforms. A steady clattering clang floated up through the stokehold gratings.

The situation was serious—you could read this in the strained white faces streaked with oil and coal dust that were wrestling with that maze of bright machinery. Having all a passenger’s sublime ignorance of the details of the engines on which their lives may depend, I cannot explain exactly what had happened. Something connected with the high-pressure engine had blown away suddenly, and they carried the first engineer, who had been there at the time, a limp, senseless burden, which was not good to look at, into his cabin, where the doctor shut himself up with resolution. Something else had promptly flung itself about wildly, and the next thing had jammed, and bits of flying steel had smitten other pieces of adjacent steel in a manner that cracked and embarrassed delicate cranks and levers. The result appeared—even I could see this—a state of chaos that was unsettling. And meanwhile, since the skipper—with a view to giving his passengers something to look at through their binoculars and amuse themselves by talking about—had laid his course that afternoon as close to the islands as he dared, the *Queen of England* was now drifting helplessly towards an evil shore in a six-knot current and a rising sea. Abeam an ominous flash came and went at regular intervals, growing staringly brighter through the darkness. This was the glare of the lighthouse perched above certain vindictive rocks, which in the finest of weather are disliked by the mariner, and for which it is difficult to see any use in the economy of Nature.

‘In forty minutes we shall be ashore if you cannot get some way on her,’ said the captain’s voice, and the labouring coal-begrimed men in dilapidated clothes set their teeth hard to their

task. A figure, face and hands black with oil and sweat, crawled giddily from some curious depth on to an upper platform, and his breathing quickened. It was Oswald. His eyes were very tired, but into them there came a sudden gleam as he saw the girl he loved.

Nora Graham was in the evening dress she had worn at dinner. Her throat was bare, and her white arms shone strangely in the light of a flickering oil lamp that smoked evilly. Her hair was badly rumpled, and a coil of it had loosened and strayed over her small shoulder. She made a winsome picture standing there in the dimness against the dull background of machinery. On deck they were hoisting out the boats with speed.

'I was coming to find you,' said Jack Oswald swiftly.

The girl looked at him quietly. 'Oughtn't you to stay there below?'

'Yes.'

'Isn't there any chance of mending it all in time?'

'Not much; a little perhaps.'

Her eyes dilated. 'Then why are you leaving your post?'

'To take care of you. Nothing else matters.'

'Where is the first engineer?'

'Dead, I expect,' was the grim answer.

'And you are the second—'

'Yes.'

'Then what are you doing here?' She stamped her small foot and spoke as if he were a naughty child. 'Go back at once!'

'Will you go up to the boats then?' he demanded. Something he read in her face seemed to steady him.

'No. I shall wait here—for you.'

'Then I shall take you on deck,' said Jack Oswald determinedly.

There was a moment's pause. Then the girl spoke, so low her voice was almost a whisper:

'Do you really love me—still?'

'I have loved you always.'

'Then show it,' she said fearlessly. 'And go back below—for me.'

The tense lines of the man's mouth relaxed. His arms went round her roughly, and for a second he held her close, her head nestling against his coat collar. Then he kissed her, and the colour leapt to her face like a flame. Next minute he swung himself down the ladder again, only calling to me—hitherto unheeded—as he went.

'You must look after her if I can't. And unlace those boots of yours, old fellow—now!'

My nerves were a little out of order, and I suggested to my companion a prompt return on deck. She remarked with serene unconcern that I might go if I liked, but that she should stay where she was. I remember some slight annoyance over this at the time. She followed up her expressed intention by seating herself calmly on the grating, where the grease spoilt her frock. Of course, it was folly pure and simple, but she declined to heed me at all. So she remained on that upper engine-room platform waiting stilly for whatever fate should send her, to be met together with her lover below. Some women are made like that—the best of them. I also stayed there, because I had been given charge of the first girl who had ever made me realise that love was a real thing. Also Jack Oswald was my friend.

It was uncommonly dull sitting there halfway up the engine-room by the side of the main steam-pipe with one's thoughts of what was about to happen for company. My predominant desire was for a smoke, and I had left my matches in the cabin. The steam-gauge by the starting-gear, with its stupid staring dial, irritated me senselessly. Thirty of the forty minutes allowed by the captain had passed, and I seemed to hear a dull roar above the noise on deck; probably it was fancy—it might have been breakers. Nora Graham's face was white and drawn. I remember reflecting that women never look their best at sea. In fact, I came to the conclusion that they ought not to go there at all.

Suddenly without warning, just as the strain of waiting was becoming very bad, the electric light sprang out again, and blessed rays of wholesome brightness flashed over the polished surfaces of crossheads and levers. There followed a hearty shout up the speaking-tube, and the sharp welcome ting of the indicator from the bridge. Huge shafts gradually revolved, and again the longed-for whirr of the propeller vibrated through the big ship. Above the slow clank of the moving machinery a faint cheer from on deck penetrated to the engine-room depths below. The *Queen of England* was saved.

A tattered figure ran triumphantly up a ladder, and Nora Graham rose quickly to her feet. A very dirty hand went recklessly round the thin white dress, and left an oily stain there. A grubby pair of lips smudged a soft cheek as Oswald kissed his girl for the second time that night.

'Don't, Jack!' she cried in alarm. 'Someone will see us.'

He kissed her again, and I withdrew. It was only what other men are always doing to other girls, but the circumstances were unusual, and I was not needed there at the moment. So I joined certain jubilant shadows that danced about wildly behind the smoke-stack on the streaming deck—till someone suggested an adjournment to the saloon for champagne. I looked over the side of the ship, and I never want to be quite so close to that portion of the Balearic Isles again. It does not look healthy from the sea, but thanks to those fellows below in the engine-room—and above all to a slender white figure who had kept their chief there—the outline of the land was rapidly growing more indistinct. A little later the skipper joined us at the table, and wiped his brow. Then he called sharply to the steward :

‘Take my compliments to the second engineer, and ask him if he can safely spare a few minutes. Tell him to come here just as he is.’

When Jack appeared, which he did with manifest reluctance, it was a curious scene to see those white-shirted, high-collared men and daintily dressed women, cheering him with unrestrained excitement. He partook modestly of a whisky-and-soda, and kept his back turned with care to that corner of the saloon where Colonel Graham stood on a seat and shouted. A retired Indian Commissioner proposed a general testimonial, and proceeded to draft it on the spot. Miss Nora had managed to squeeze up close to the hero of the hour, and her eyes shone enchantingly.

After the hubbub had somewhat subsided, the gentleman with the testimonial inquired weightily of the skipper the name of their preserver.

‘Mr. J. Oswald,’ replied the captain with cordial interest.

‘The Honourable John Oswald,’ corrected a girl’s clear voice, though the owner of the voice was breathlessly rosy at the moment.

A sudden shrill squeak betrayed the presence of my revered aunt. She burst through the amazed throng of passengers, and I heard Colonel Graham say, ‘Good Lord!’ quite distinctly.

Then it was that the second engineer turned with a quick movement and caught his sweetheart’s hand brazenly before them all, in a tight grasp, as if resolved to keep her against all comers. Explanations occurred tumultuously, and everybody talked at once. And the parental blessing that eventually followed was public, but not perfunctory. In fact, it made a very pretty romance, and the passengers never ceased to discuss it all the remainder of the voyage home to Southampton. Personally, I used to visit the

engineers' quarters and listen quite patiently while Jack discoursed on the perfect nature of woman. Though it has never been my own fortune to win the love of a girl, yet I understand a little now what such love must be worth since I have looked into Nora's dark eyes and seen there the happiness which had come.

The last time I saw Jack was in Piccadilly, after the honeymoon.

'It is just the best thing on earth,' he said, in answer to my inquiries, 'to be married to the woman you love.' Then, such is the inconsistency of human nature, he added almost regretfully, 'But I have had to cut my engineering.'

'Poor chap!' said I.

Sometimes I wonder what would have happened to us all if the lady, who is now the Honourable Mrs. John Oswald, had acted differently that night.

ARTHUR H. HENDERSON.

At the Sign of the Ship.

MANY persons have lately been discussing the question of church-going. Why do so few men go to church? The assemblage always, or almost always, exhibits a large majority of women. But this is relatively unimportant, for women are always numerically preponderant in almost any non-political meeting within doors. Every lecturer, especially when his lecture is not a gate-money affair, knows that the sex supplies most of his audience. I have seen ladies devoutly attend a series of Hegelian lectures, while men stayed away, and that was in a university town. That the ladies understood what they heard I deem improbable in a high degree! the men knew that their intellects were unequal to tackling the lofty theme. The truth is that women love to assemble themselves together under a roof, and that men naturally dislike the process. At an afternoon performance or *matinée* in a theatre there are far more bonnets than bare heads. Moreover, though woman often says that she 'has no time,' she really has more time at her disposal than man possesses—when she chooses.

* * *

One cause of non-church-going, and of non-chapel-going, is, of course, religious scepticism. The topic need not here be discussed; people can believe in Haeckel who cannot believe in revealed religion. They expend their large capital of credulity on the German philosopher, and we need not ask why *they* go not to church, or chapel, or even to Temple (City). In 1658, or thereabouts, a sturdy beggar was hanged in Dumfries for being a sturdy atheist; but this is now a free country, and people are not driven into kirk to avoid capital punishment.

* * *

But all infrequent and sparing church-goers do not absent themselves because they are irreligious. The fact is that they are tired, that they regard Sunday as a day of rest, and that they

do not regard church as a place of repose. The mere idea of donning boots, frock-coats, and tall hats early in the day is repugnant to their spirits. Others, more energetic, having but one off-day in the week, use it for air and exercise. They fish, or walk, or bicycle, or play golf. I condemn but understand their conduct, being much too Scottish to play golf or fish, myself, on Sunday. The Israelites, from whom we inherit the Sabbath, did not go to temple every Sabbath—Jerusalem was too far away—and in their palmy times they had no synagogues whither they could repair once a week or oftener. They merely did not work on the Sabbath—at least, they were forbidden to do so. The Decalogue says nothing about not playing on the Sabbath, nothing about going to tabernacle on that day. The command not to play is a Protestant injunction, 'a thing of human invention,' and therefore Knox ought, logically, to have deemed it 'idolatrous.' They say that even Calvin played bowls on Sundays, and had cricket been popular at Geneva no doubt he would have played cricket, or umpired at least. In the old English translation of *Don Quixote*, cricket is played in Spain. Servetus, whom Calvin burned at Geneva, was a Spaniard, but probably he did not introduce cricket into Switzerland. I did that in 1870, but the game struck no root. However, this is a digression. Calvin certainly made people go to the sermons. My contention, on the main point, is that many not irreligious people seldom go to church, like Dr. Johnson's religious friend Dr. Campbell. According to Dr. Johnson, Campbell 'never lied on paper,' 'never with pen and ink.' 'Campbell is a good man, a pious man,' said Dr. Johnson. 'I am afraid he has not been in the inside of a church for many years; but he never passes a church without pulling off his hat. This shows that he has good principles. I used to go pretty often to Campbell's on a Sunday evening.' Campbell declared that he once drank thirteen bottles of port at a sitting. Dr. Johnson was uncertain about this, but said: 'I loved Campbell; he was a solid, orthodox man; he had a reverence for religion. Though defective in practice, he was religious in principle.' Boswell thought Campbell was misunderstood. 'Though Milton could without remorse absent himself from public worship, I cannot,' says young Auchinleck. Campbell, he says, read the Greek Testament constantly; but he was not a church-goer.

* * *

Many of us, if the clergy will believe me, are Campbellites. On this point I have taken counsel with a man of letters, who has

the misfortune to be a labourer out of work. By my request he has put on paper a few comments on an article lately published by another member of Clan Diarmaid—the Rev. R. J. Campbell, of the City Temple. The preacher does not spare the comfortable classes; but they are used to being castigated by the pulpit and the Press. As to the working man, the reverend author writes: ‘His keenest struggles are for shorter hours and better wages, but not that he may employ them for higher ends. He is often lazy, unthrift, improvident, sometimes immoral, foul-mouthed, and untruthful. Unlike the American worker, he has comparatively little aspiration or ambition. Conscientiousness is a virtue conspicuous by its rarity. Those who have had close dealings with the British working man know he needs watching or work will be badly done, and the time employed upon it will be as long as he can get paid for. It is as Ruskin puts it—that joy in labour has ceased under the sun. The worker does not work for the work’s sake, but for the pay’s sake, and his principal aim is to work as little as possible, and get as much as possible both in money and leisure. Such a working man’s Sunday, therefore, is exactly what we should expect—a day of idle self-indulgence or drunken rowdyism. He does not go to church, and the churches are blamed for it; but his reason for abstention is not because his ethical standard is higher than the church-goer’s—far otherwise.’

* * *

My labouring ally (who expresses himself with perfect urbanity) observes that a good deal of nonsense was uttered in reply to Dr. Campbell; especially a saving clause which he introduced was overlooked by his critics. But my friend goes on to say that the desire for shorter periods of work and better wages is not peculiar to the class of manual toilers. We all want these things. Even authors struggle to obtain higher prices or royalties for their work, and, to them, their work is as joyous as Mr. Ruskin says that work ought to be. (The author of the Book of Genesis took the opposite view.) There can be no ‘joy’ in always making the same pin-head by machinery. ‘Yellow labour,’ some hint, was sent to Africa because the mine-owners, for their part, wanted to get more work for less wages. Their idea is not more unselfish than that of the working man. As to laziness, my unemployed friend writes: ‘To-day I saw ten unemployed workmen jostling each other in their eager endeavours to get a glimpse of the announcements of vacant situations in the advertisement columns of a daily paper,

as the journal was displayed inside a free library; and the scene was repeated every time a later edition of the various papers was posted up. Were these men seeking an outlet for their ingrained laziness? Mr. Campbell might say that their laziness would be made manifest when they were installed in situations. But the employer has the remedy in his own hands, and while there is a surplus of available labour he does not hesitate to use it. The workman knows this, and there is nothing in the world he dreads so much as the lean ogre of unemployment. To be thrown suddenly on one's own scanty resources; to tramp the city streets from morning till night, day after day, week after week, in a fruitless quest for work; to see the scanty household belongings disappearing bit by bit; to have the wife's anxious glance searching one's face every evening for hopeful tidings; worse still, to hear little children asking for food while the condition of the larder resembles that of the celebrated Madame Hubbard—it is a dismal and depressing experience, and I have never met a fellow-workman who, having gone through one such time, was so much in love with laziness as to desire a repetition of it. Yet thousands of would-be industrious workmen are at present undergoing the like experiences. But the Rev. R. J. Campbell knows all this. His position as a minister of the Gospel demands that he should not be ignorant of these things.

‘In reply to the charge that the workman is unthrifty and improvident, it can reasonably be urged that only the higher-paid artisans are able to exercise the virtue of thrift. It has been proved by comparatively recent statistics that the average weekly wages of the working classes in this country amount to somewhat less than twenty-three shillings per adult male. Now, arguing from my own experience, as having subsisted on such a wage, I know that it is impossible for a working man, even though his family be small, to save anything for a rainy day, or other such contingency, out of that income. Certainly some working men who are in receipt of this average wage, or even less, manage to spend a portion of it at the public-house, but they or their families, or both, have to suffer by the deprivation of some necessary for this indulgence. Generally it is the family that pays the penalty, and that fact is a proof that some workmen are criminally selfish—which, by the way, is an adjective that the Rev. R. J. Campbell has omitted to include in his collection.’

On Dr. Campbell's other charges, as of being 'foul-mouthed,' my friend has a good deal to say. He admits the habitual use of a disagreeable adjective, but, really, that is a mere rhetorical device. Scottish judges, a century ago, were at least as foul-mouthed, and were far more devoted to the bottle than the average workman. One glory of the Bench, being restricted to water, discovered and confessed that for thirty years he had never been sober. As for the language of Lord Braxfield, it far outshone, in florid eloquence, that of the working man, and it was not only our army and navy that swore terribly all over Western Europe, and wherever a ship might sail. Even now, is the language used on the Links peculiarly chaste? I am not prepared to throw the first stone at the rhetorical toiler. That the working man is peculiarly mendacious, or mendacious at all, I have never discovered by experience, and my ally writes that the charge 'is too absurd to need refutation.' Concerning the superior ambition and conscientiousness of the Transatlantic toiler, my friend writes: 'As for the comparison with the American workman, one has to take Mr. Campbell's word for the statement. I have a friend, a carpenter, who has just returned from America, not finding there sufficient scope for his "ambition and aspiration." Questioned as to labour conditions in that country, he gave a terse illustration of Yankee "hustling" methods: "Two men are sent into two separate rooms to do the necessary carpentering. The one who comes out last is fired." ("Fired," it may be necessary to mention, is the American equivalent of our "discharged." Doubtless the process is supposed to be stimulating to the "fired" one's ambition.)'

* * *

As to the absence of delight in work for its own sake, it is urged, first, that much work is mere mechanical machine-tending; next, that the toiler has seldom the luck to find a task congenial to his natural tastes. 'If he *could* choose his occupation there is a danger that the indulgence of his aspirations might result in the profession of popular preacher being overcrowded.' This, I think, is true. Though many Britons do not rejoice in being quiescent listeners in churches (or temples), I am convinced that almost every one of us would dearly love to have his innings in the pulpit. On this instinct of the British heart I shall later base a practical suggestion.

* * *

Coming to the workman's indifference in the matter of church-going, my friend says, and some of his words are of gold: 'The very head and front of the workman's offending seems to be that he does not attend church. It may be taken for granted that working men do not, to any considerable number, frequent either church or chapel. I have worked in a factory employing upwards of three thousand men, and there I have found but a comparatively small proportion, not more than 20 per cent., who professed any active interest in matters of religion. The remainder were indifferent. What is the special reason for this remissness I do not pretend to know. Some say it is a question of dress. The artisan's "Sunday best" is not a tasteful garb, and perhaps the wearer is dimly conscious of that fact. I have noticed that the male members of the congregation who linger outside the church or chapel doors after the service is over are almost without exception attired in the frock-coat and silk hat of customary respectability; and certainly the working man resents the disdain which some of these gentlemen display towards one less immaculately attired than themselves. Perhaps the remedy for this untoward state of affairs lies in the adoption of some inexpensive, uniform garment, designed expressly for church- and chapel-goers. If this suggestion is put into practice, the ladies must be exempted, or the churches will infallibly lose the more numerous and more interesting part of their present congregations.'

* * *

Here the nail is knocked on the head. Let us have a church-going uniform—say, a vestment like an umpire's coat, made of canvas (or of sackcloth—anything cheap will do), and covering the wearer from neck to heel. A canvas cap will do the rest, and place all men on a level—in church. Nobody will be ashamed to go because he has not a frock-coat and a tall hat. Let the bishops see to this, and let the great Nonconformists aid in this salutary reform of the vestments of the laity.

* * *

We now come to the most serious obstacle to church-going, in many cases—sermons. In other cases, preaching, I fear, is the chief attraction. 'Preach! preach!' said Knox, in 1559, when, among Calvinists, people went 'to the sermons,' *au prêche*, as, before the Reformation, they went to the Mass. In French, *le prêche* means Protestantism; *aller au prêche* means to join the

Protestant Church and party. In the Presbyterian Kirk, preaching, not worship, became the sole object and end of church. When even the Knoxian Book of Common Order was dropped, the current voice of the preacher was everything. His extempore, or, at least, self-made, prayers were only a variety of the sermons, were often 'topical' and political. The hearers, not knowing what the minister was going to pray for, or in what terms, could not pray with him; they could only listen, admire, and criticise. By the admission of an eminent Covenanter, 'I have seen, and daily, much disorder and extravagancy in conceived' (original) 'prayers, which does afflict me.' (*Diary of Brodie of Brodie*, 1661.)

* *

The essence of Protestant church-going, where no Book of Common Prayer existed, was intellectual. The essence of the Catholic ideal has been spiritual, hampered by the use of a language not understood of the people. The English Puritans and Scottish Presbyterians cut down the part of the congregation in common worship. They abolished in Scotland, in England they were eager to abolish, the responses. The preacher was everything, except that the congregation took part in psalm-singing. Why this was right, while the utterance of responses was wrong, one can only guess, or try to guess.

* *

As to church-going, the sermon cuts both ways. My ally writes that the dull mechanic exercise of many trades 'engenders a craving for something more stimulating than listening to what is often, if the truth be told, but a prosy discourse—for all preachers are not R. J. Campbells. But it is scarcely wise to assume that every workman who does not go to church spends the Sunday in idle self-indulgence or drunken rowdyism; or, as Mr. Campbell says later in his article, as "a roystering holiday-maker singing lewd songs opposite the doors of home-keeping citizens." Many workmen take advantage of their release from the factory and the slum to take a stroll in the country—such country as skirts our manufacturing towns—and a goodly proportion of those who do not go to church or chapel attend the adult Sunday schools. At these schools the scholars are not called upon to accept any particular dogmas, and there are no class distinctions, but all meet upon a common ground of good fellowship. The instruction provided is not solely of a religious character. Copy-books are

furnished for the improvement of the handwriting of those who desire it, and there is usually a library from which, for a nominal charge, books may be borrowed.'

* * *

Looking at the case of the middle classes, of most of us, it is clear that eloquent and sympathetic preachers such as Dr. R. J. Campbell and the late Canon Ainger, or learned preachers such as Bampton lecturers, draw many men *au prêche* who are actually frightened away by bad, dull, ignorant preachers. The sect of Campbellites (followers of that Dr. Campbell whom Dr. Johnson loved) often take much pleasure in the service, whether ornate or simple, of the Church of England. They are not irreligious men—much the reverse. But they find that the spiritual benefits of the service are apt to be destroyed by silly sermons; perhaps even by good sermons, which stimulate the critical faculty, and rouse intellectual opposition and a desire to have it out with the preacher in the vestry. As this topic is serious, I resist the temptation to illustrate the matter by giving (as I am tempted to do) samples of irritating sermons. To be told that, as in heaven 'there will be no more sea,' therefore there will be no vegetation, is a mild specimen of the thing that troubles us. We must not be too hard on the preachers. The art of literary composition, the saving sense of humour, knowledge, wisdom, are not given to all men in holy orders, and yet these men are compelled to exercise a difficult form of the literary art. Their compulsory sermons are very great deterrents to the Campbellite; they frighten him away from church. What can be done? We cannot enable many excellent men to be good preachers, yet we insist that they must preach, and so ruin the effect of the services in many blundering ways. To walk out of church is to be rude to the preacher. We are not King James, to cry: 'Man, either speak sense or come down!' We cannot shout, like Queen Elizabeth: 'Hold there; leave that alone!' But how we wish that such explosions were possible, and how inappropriate is our frame of mind!

* * *

My practical suggestion that each layman should preach in turn, since, as we all want to preach, the expedient would fill the churches, is not practicable, I fear. The bishop, or somebody, would need to examine each candidate for a turn in the pulpit, and the labour would be excessive. The idea of an Order of

Preachers, composed of clerics who really *can* preach, is notoriously open to other objections. Few clergymen, even if conscious of being bad preachers, would like to give up their pulpits. Again, even if they were willing to read classical masterpieces of pulpit oratory, this would offend many of the congregation. They like to criticise the rector or the curate—an exercise not religious in character, but rather frivolous than otherwise. One cannot do more than state the difficulties of the case, and explain those deterrents to Campbellites which are least understood by the clergy. They are often overworked, and that may in part account for the facts thus stated by my ally.

* * *

‘Often in the poorer quarters of our large towns the clergy know little of their parishioners outside the circle of the regular church-goers. In this connection I may be pardoned for relating a trifling personal experience. I had lived for about two years in a back house, of a back street, in the midst of a thickly populated industrial district, my limited income preventing me from residing in more palatial and salubrious quarters. During that time I had never come in contact with the minister in spiritual charge of the parish. One Sunday afternoon, however, I received a visit from an elderly gentleman in clerical attire and eye-glasses, who announced himself as the vicar. He had kindly brought me a copy of the parish magazine. My wife had been ailing that day, and the most pressing of the household duties had fallen to my share. To while away an interval between my domestic tasks, I had been reading the *Descent of Man*, lent me by a friend, and I had laid the book aside upon my visitor’s entrance. After making a few urbane inquiries as to my personal circumstances, size of family, and so forth, the reverend gentleman’s glance fell upon the book, and no sooner did he discover the title than he gravely reprehended me for reading such “trash” on the Sabbath. Then he launched into a vehement exposition of the religious heresies of the man Darwin, in the style of the Rev. Nehemiah Holdenough. When he had concluded, I was about to justify myself, but, unwilling further to wound the worthy gentleman’s susceptibilities, I refrained, and merely invited him to take a cup of tea. This offer he curtly declined, and made a speedy departure, taking—unkindest cut of all—the parish magazine away with him! During the ensuing twelve months that I remained in the district the visit was not repeated, and I should have considered myself a

special object of the vicar's displeasure had I not found that my neighbours were likewise unhonoured.'

* * *

Had this vicar been a man of sense, he would have entered into a friendly discussion of Darwinism—a faith which is not without its interesting difficulties. The author whom I have been citing, though a labourer out of employment, is as capable as another of appreciating discussion of the Darwinian hypothesis.

ANDREW LANG.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Editor requests that his correspondents will be good enough to write to him, informing him of the subject of any article they wish to offer, before sending the MS. A stamped and addressed envelope should accompany the MS. if the writer wishes it to be returned in case of non-acceptance. The Editor can in no case hold himself responsible for accidental loss. All communications should be addressed to

The Editor of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE

39 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

